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ABSTRACT

This collection of 10 articles and stories highlights ongoing experiments in colleges and universities which address the relationship of higher education institutions and citizenship responsibility. Following a foreword by Deborah White, articles are: "The Civic Roots of Academic Social Science Scholarship in American" (R. Claire Snyder), which traces the history of the first social science association; "Public Scholarship II: An Interview with Jay Rosen" (Jay Rosen), which suggests how academics might engage with the community; "Leaving the High Ground" (David W. Brown) discusses learning laboratories where interested students can experiment with real-world problems; "The Packaged Self, Modern and Postmodern Persons in Late Capitalist Times: The Challenge to Higher Education" (Mary Stanley) explores the relation between higher education and citizenship development; "Public Work: An Interview with Harry Boyte" (Harry Boyte) offers a definition of democracy as the "unfinished work of people"; in "NIF at A&M" (D. Conor Seyle) a student searches for community; "Talking About My Generation: The Public Work of Today's Young Scholars" (Maria Farland) offers examples of scholar-citizens who use their knowledge for the public good; "The College as Citizen: One College Evolves Through the Work of Public Deliberation" (Douglas Challenger) relates the story of a campus race problem that became a catalyst for change for faculty and students; "Diversity, Democracy, and Civic Engagement: Higher Education and Its Unique Opportunity" (Debra Humphreys) presents a program that tackles both lack of civic engagement and diversity issues; and "An Invitation" (David Mathews), which defines issues to be explored over the next two years and invites readers to join in the conversation. (CH)

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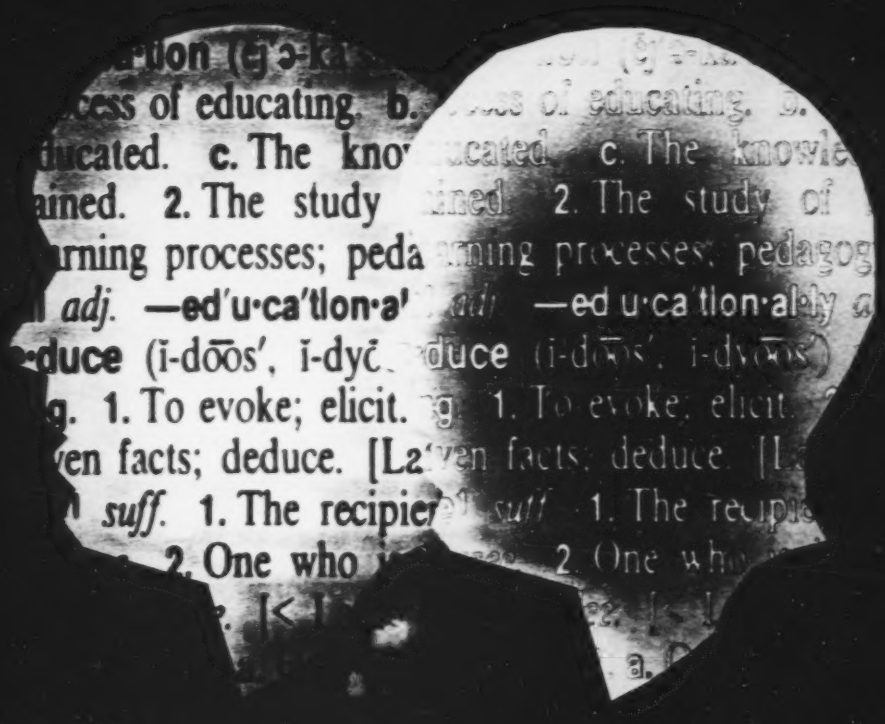

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FOREWORD

By Deborah Witte

The academy has a dilemma. There has been a shift away from civic education toward preparing students for the job market. Economic and "practical" concerns — of students, faculty, and administrators — have taken over the driver's seat, while the original mission of the university is riding in back. Higher education's very purpose, relevance, and legitimacy is being questioned, not only by those inside its walls, but also by the larger public. Have students become consumers, faculty discipline-bound professionals, and administrators simply fund-raisers? Where is the educating? Where is the learning? What is it all for?

This issue of the *Higher Education Exchange* highlights ongoing experiments in colleges and universities around the country where committed and concerned faculty, students, and administrators are wrestling with questions such as: What does higher education contribute to civic life? How does the academy prepare its graduates for citizenship? Should the academy respond to democratic claims made on it by the public? How? What responsibility do faculty have? To whom are they responsible? What will have to change for higher education to become a serious participant in rebuilding civic life?

The articles and stories presented here show that students can be citizens as well as consumers, that faculty can do public work, and administrators are engaged with a larger public than simply donors. There are numerous colleges and universities that are concerned with and dedicated to enhancing civic life.

By reframing traditional knowledge acquisition and dissemination as community-building practices, the writers in this issue present a convincing case for faculty, students, and administrators engaging in public life. Issues such as diversity, the good life, professionalism, equity, and authenticity are not only issues for the campus, they are issues for the community. These articles call for engagement as one way into the task of truly "public" scholarship.

R. Claire Snyder, professor at George Mason University, traces the history of the first social science association and in the

process uncovers its civic underpinnings. She sought out this history in an attempt to find answers to a personal question. As someone who "cares about the vitality of American public life," she asks herself, "What responsibilities to civic life do I owe to my profession and to my community? How might I recapture and hold fast to the civic origins of my discipline?" She finds a compatriot in Jay Rosen, chair of the journalism department at New York University, who in an interview with coeditor David Brown, suggests how academics might engage with the community. He offers faculty a way to be true to all they hold dear — their professionalism, their expert knowledge, and their credentials — while still participating in and contributing to the world where the rest of us live.

David Brown, a faculty member at the New School for Social Research, shares his experiences teaching future practitioners and suggests that what is missing from higher education is a learning laboratory where students interested in solving real-world problems can experiment and learn. The academy needs to shorten the distance between its highly ordered and centralized hierarchy, he warns, and the real-life, messy nature of democracy. Messiness is the hallmark of community work and we needn't be afraid to get our hands dirty in it.

Mary Stanley, with characteristic eloquence, explores whether higher education may be implicated in the development of the citizen. She asks, "Does higher education have a responsibility to shape the democratic person or is it merely a provider of a service to the student?" Can higher education hold itself apart from the society to which students/consumers belong? And if so, what are the implications for community?

Harry Boyte, director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Democracy and Citizenship, in another interview with David Brown, offers a definition of democracy best understood as the "unfinished work of the people." In his research he often finds himself face-to-face with the pent-up desire of faculty and students for a connection to the larger community. Every viewpoint in a community, he asserts, improves the discourse aimed at solving public problems. He challenges us to view the academy as part of the local civic culture and shares the experiments he and his team have designed to do just that.

D. Conor Seyle of Texas A&M is a student with a desire for connecting to his community. He finds himself standing between

the world of community and the world of the academy, like many students unsure of where and what will ultimately be his place. He shares his experience with campus deliberations as he asks a kind of "Is that all there is?" question. His search for more than the prescribed life of a student is joined by others on his campus — faculty as well as students — yet he is acutely aware that they are few in number.

Maria Farland, a Ph.D. in the humanities and professor at Fordham University, suggests that the perennial problem of "no room in the academy for new Ph.D.'s" can be an opportunity for humanities scholars, trained in addressing public problems, to share their expertise with the community outside the academy. She has many examples of scholar-citizens who may be at the forefront of a trend involving scholars who, possessing the potential and opportunity to put their knowledge to work for the public, are making the humanities truly public.

Douglas Challenger, a faculty member at Franklin Pierce College, relates the story of a race problem on campus that initially threatened its sense of community but instead was the catalyst for a transforming experience for faculty and students. Through deliberation, the campus community is making the difficult discovery that issues cannot be solved by speakers or films or other well-meaning, though sterile, interactions. They are discovering a way higher education can build community on campus.

Debra Humphreys, director of programs in the office of diversity at AAC&U, presents an argument for joining two problems — a lack of civic engagement and diversity issues on campus — to bolster movement toward a solution of both. The cynicism of young Americans comes, she reveals, from an inability to see how they might contribute to problem solving in community. And issues of diversity prevent the academy from fulfilling their ideal of providing knowledge to all who knock at their doors. Combining the two ideas by educating about issues of diversity, she suggests, provides a way for students to be involved in real-life problems on campus; an involvement that they then can carry with them as they enter communities outside the academy.

In the last pages of the journal, David Mathews, president of the Kettering Foundation, describes the questions this journal will explore over the next two years and issues an invitation to the reader to join in the conversation. Collaboration, aimed at discovering avenues for creating new relationships and rediscovering old rela-

tionships between higher education and the public, is important.

As the articles in this issue reveal, there are many of us grappling with the dilemma of what a university's civic mission ought to be. This journal is an opportunity to share those struggles, both intellectually and pragmatically. With this issue, we are calling for papers and seeking contributions that may point toward answers to the questions posed in this article. What does higher education contribute to civic life? How might the academy prepare its graduates for citizenship? How should the academy respond to democratic claims made on it by the public? What will have to change for higher education to become a serious participant in rebuilding civic life? We welcome stories of your experiments and experiences in attempting to answer these questions.

THE CIVIC ROOTS OF ACADEMIC SOCIAL SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP IN AMERICA

By R. Claire Snyder

> *The persons composing [the American Social Science Association] are expected to meet together, to read papers and pursue discussions, and to seek the assistance of those who have a practical acquaintance with reform, as well as that of purely abstract reasoners.*
>
> *They are to collect all facts, diffuse all knowledge, and stimulate all inquiry, which have a bearing on social welfare. It has long since been shown, that the man of science who confines himself to a specialty, who does not, at the very least, conquer the underlying principles of other branches of scientific inquiry, is necessarily misled, and cannot avoid frequent mistakes. To have any perception of the perspective of his subject, he must see it in its relation to other subjects. Something like this is true of those who investigate the necessities of society. If they associate themselves together, they have the advantage of each other's knowledge; they do not misunderstand their own relative positions; and they insure an economy of time, labor, and money.*
>
> — Statement of Purpose, American Social Science Association, 1866 (Cited in Bernard, 562-63)

Do today's professionals have any important insights to share that could help American society deal with one of its most vexing and important political challenges: how to revitalize American civic life and return to citizens a sense of sovereignty over their own public institutions. This question has recently returned to the public eye via the widespread coverage given in the mass media to the publication of Jay Rosen's new book, *What Are Journalists For?* (Yale University Press, 1999). In short, Rosen's study documents an innovative movement called "public journalism" through which a group of concerned journalists and journalism professors began to

critically examine the negative effect that current practices of journalism are having on American civic life and thus rethink their own responsibilities as professionals in a democratic society.

Central to the project of "public journalism" is the attempt of scholars, like Rosen, to reimagine the history of the journalism profession in public terms. Jim Carey, an early pioneer of public journalism, began this work years ago by observing that the field of journalism has traditionally been enthralled by "a Whig interpretation of journalism history" that views the development of journalism as the slow, steady expansion of freedom and knowledge from the politicized press to the professional press — from bias to objectivity. While this story is certainly not *untrue*, as Carey notes, scholars like he and Rosen understand the development of journalism within the broader context of American civic history. That is to say, just as our notion of citizenship has changed over time, from the vision of active participation that characterized the nineteenth century to the more individualistic and passive notion of citizenship prevalent today, so has the practice of journalism shifted from a focus on stimulating public engagement to the function of simply providing individuals with information. Concerned about the weakening character of American public life, both Carey and Rosen, along with a variety of practicing journalists, thus embarked on the project of reviewing journalism history in terms of its original civic purposes, a process recently documented in *What Are Journalists For?*

But can the historiographical methodology of public journalism become a model that could be replicated within other professions? For example, how would a group of academic research-scholars go about reconstructing their own history in light of its civic purposes? After all, the history of academic scholarship hardly exemplifies a civic endeavor. Instead, academic scholarship as we know it today developed at the turn of the twentieth century during the same time at which our understanding of democratic politics shifted from a vision in which citizens must take an active role to our current belief that the general public needs the guidance of experts and professional politicians. Indeed, early social science scholars wanted to achieve positions of power and prestige within society, and so they proffered themselves as the necessary guardians of a public they increasingly viewed as ignorant and irrational. In light of this by now well-documented story, it appears that the history of academic scholarship may be hope-

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lessly elitist — forever wedded to Alan Wolfe's vision of the autonomous scholar committed to his or her own quest for truth.

What obligations does someone who has chosen a career as a research-scholar have in a democratic society?

Despite these challenges, however, the interesting work done by the public journalism movement has inspired me, a young research-scholar who cares about the vitality of American public life, to start rethinking my own professional responsibilities vis-à-vis civic life, as well as the historiography of my own discipline. What obligations does someone who has chosen a career as a research-scholar have in a democratic society? Should academic scholarship contribute anything to the democratic public? Must the professional academic locate herself within the Whig narrative of growing academic freedom and the accelerating production of knowledge? Or does the history of academic scholarship actually have some civic roots that can be uncovered in order to provide fresh insights about how to deal with contemporary public problems? In this short essay, I hope to contribute to a revisioning of American academic history that will follow in the footsteps of public journalism, by complicating the typical "Whiggish" narrative about the progress of academic social science scholarship from the bias of social reform to the "objectivity" of social science — not because this traditional story is wrong, but because it is so familiar that it no longer stimulates our thinking in a productive way.

The Public Purposes of the American Social Science Association

At its inception, American Social Science as a field of inquiry was developed for the primary purpose of addressing a variety of public problems that plagued American society during the nineteenth century. Supporters of the nineteenth-century transition to a scientific epistemology, *social* science practitioners aimed to apply developing scientific research methods to the analysis of a wide variety of contemporary social problems, believing that this approach would quickly yield practical solutions. To better achieve this goal, in 1865 a group of civically concerned men and women founded the American Social Science Association (ASSA), an organization that would respond directly to the new civic challenges generated by the process of industrialization and the

increasing heterogeneity of the American public. Indeed, ASSA members desperately wanted to use their innovative methodology to help deal with new challenges because, in light of the seemingly systemic nature of many new social problems, traditional analyses no longer seemed to make sense. For example, as the process of industrialization ironically produced a large impoverished class of workers, traditional mantras that blamed an individual's poverty on laziness or moral turpitude seemed inadequate. Thus, the ASSA hoped to provide informed suggestions about how to solve America's growing list of public problems.

Specifically advocating social reform, the American Social Science Association brought together an interesting mix of people who were concerned about social problems, including citizen activists as well as public leaders, and an unusually large number of women, as well as many men. One sector of the ASSA consisted of a "first generation" of social science academics. These "amateur social scientists" were not formally trained in social science, given that no such training existed in America, and none held Ph.D.'s. However, as American colleges began incorporating electives into their curricula for the first time, many of these aspiring academics took advantage of the opportunity to teach college courses in their new field. While these social science academics were less vehement in their advocacy of social reform than were their ASSA compatriots who had come to social science from active involvement in the abolitionist and moral reform movements, nevertheless, members of the "first generation" still believed that social science methods would logically point the way toward positive social change.

...they firmly believed that a scientific analysis of public problems would reveal solutions that would lead directly to positive social change.

In other words, members of the American social science movement saw no contradiction between espousing scientific objectivity and advocating social reform. To the contrary, they firmly believed that a scientific analysis of public problems would reveal solutions that would lead directly to positive social change. Pragmatic in orientation, the American Social Science Association wanted to develop a comprehensive knowledge of society and its problems. In order to accomplish this goal, members built on and developed the method of empiricism to help make sense of the overwhelming barrage of facts they acquired when they pooled their records. Naïve at times, these early social scientists sometimes thought that political corruption resulted from ignorance and misunderstanding, rather than malice and greed. Consequently, discovering the truth through social science methods, they

believed, should lead directly to social reform.

Members of the ASSA hoped to use the knowledge they produced to educate citizens, who could then work to solve their own problems. To accomplish this goal, members disseminated their findings via the popular press and public school curricula, and they communicated directly to poor and working-class people through "public lectures and open meetings," telling them ways they could help themselves via better ventilation in their houses, improved sanitation, and a basic knowledge of nutrition, as well as detailing plans to improve factory conditions, provide industrial insurance, and institute profit sharing and cooperative buying. In addition to directly engaging the public, these early social scientists also attempted to convince "influential citizens" to support "voluntary welfare measures" and "regulatory social legislation" by educating them about "the sordid details of factory labor and slum life" (Furner, 1975: 23). So while the knowledge produced by these early social scientists was not necessarily a product of public dialogue, ASSA members wanted their findings to contribute to an ongoing discourse among the public and its leaders about solving shared problems.

Despite its important civic purposes, the American Social Science Association lasted only 20 years before it broke apart. One important factor that contributed to its demise was the conservative opposition of certain influential sectors of society to the specter of radical reform. That is to say, as the labor struggle intensified in the 1880s, the ASSA came under attack for entertaining ideas that some considered "socialist." And indeed, members of ASSA did empirically determine that the mostly unregulated process of industrialization was in fact a primary cause of the new set of public problems facing American society in the late nineteenth century. However, while a few very radical reformers suggested doing away with the market economy altogether, most members of the ASSA believed that "voluntary, collective efforts to reduce the economic insecurities of the industrial system were vastly preferable in almost every case to basic changes in the system" (Furner, 1975: 23). Nevertheless, many conservative members of society feared the more radical ideas entertained during ASSA discussions of America's public problems.

Interestingly, many of the so-called "socialist" arguments examined by the ASSA actually evolved directly out of traditional

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American understandings of "cooperative commonwealth," rather than out of the Marxist discourse popular in Europe. For example, John Bates Clark and Henry Carter Adams, who eventually became leading proponents of professional social science, "pictured socialism as a cooperative society, organized by workers and social groups rather than by the state," a definition also shared by the Knights of Labor (Ross, 1977: 23-24). In other words, American "socialism" was much "broader" than the "more restrictive" definition popular on the Continent (Ross, 1977: 13). In fact, Clark, Adams, and others preferred the term "economic republicanism," which they saw as "a natural extension of democracy in suffrage to all social life." They sought more "egalitarian and fraternal values" in a world increasingly dominated by liberal individualism. While they had originally embraced laissez-faire economics — in which an "invisible hand" supposedly ensured the good of all — like others in the ASSA, they "were forced to rethink their economic philosophy," when "they became aware of the social conflict, misery, and greed produced by industrial capitalism" (Ross, 1977: 18). Likewise, "radicals such as Daniel De Leon, Henry George, and Stephen Pearl Andrews called themselves social scientists and based their various forms of socialism on . . . American traditions of evangelicalism, civic duty, community, and brotherhood" (Smith, 1994: 18). Nevertheless, despite the differences between American and European understandings of social democracy, the ideas entertained by the ASSA and its agenda for social reform eventually came under attack.

The increasingly publicized portrayal of the civically engaged American Social Science Association as a hotbed of radicals deeply troubled those ASSA members who wanted to take advantage of the new opportunities afforded by major changes within still predominantly conservative institutions of higher education — the loosening of clerical control over higher learning, the growing incorporation of electives into college curricula, and the creation of American graduate schools. Indeed the conservative condemnation of the ASSA weighed heavily on would-be professional research-scholars, as they were already on the defensive, having had a previous proposal to merge the ASSA with the newly founded Johns Hopkins University rejected because the university's president considered advocacy an inappropriate activity for university scholars. And in actuality, would-be academics had good reason to worry; between 1886 and 1894 a wave of political repression

would sweep through the new universities and result in several professors losing their jobs for supporting social reform. Consequently, those social scientists who wanted jobs in the new academy, and who desired a certain level of professional authority and prestige, feared that any continued affiliation with ASSA "radicals" would tarnish the entire social science movement. Consequently, academic social scientists distanced themselves from ASSA and began to emphasize objectivity over advocacy — a trend that would come to fruition during the early twentieth century.

Under political attack, but also subject to the larger nineteenth-century *zeitgeist* of specialization and professionalization, the American Social Science Association ultimately disintegrated. In its wake emerged two different groups of social scientists. The first consisted of those *academic social science scholars* who chose to work within newly created modern research universities, like Johns Hopkins, Columbia, and the University of Chicago. This group would further fragment as the originally unified field of social science gave way to the modern disciplines. Economics, psychology, anthropology, and political science all formed their first graduate programs and professional journals in the 1880s, followed shortly thereafter by sociology in the 1890s. Subsequently, all five disciplines quickly founded national professional organizations. In addition, however, a second, less well-known group also emerged from the ASSA: the *nonacademic social science scholars* who continued to vigorously advocate social reform and address public problems directly, through their work with institutions like Hull House. Importantly, this latter group included almost all of the female members of the ASSA, who did not have a realistic opportunity to pursue academic careers in the new universities.

The Civic Activities of Early Academic Social Science Scholars

Around the same time that the ASSA disintegrated, a new generation of academic social scientists entered American higher education. These young men had received graduate training in the German universities, and many held doctorates. This second "professional generation" of social scientists brought new ideas back with them from Germany, and this new influx of knowledge generated heated debates within several of the newly emerging disciplines. Although inspired by European intellectual discourses

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rather than American civic practices, this second generation wanted America's new research universities to produce knowledge that could help solve public problems, and they acted more militantly to advance this goal than did the somewhat timid academic contingent of the ASSA. Despite their later turn toward "objective" social science, scholars in the newly constructed disciplines of sociology, economics, and political science, all continued to address in some way the civic concerns that had animated the original American Social Science Association.

Sociology remained the most committed to the original purpose of the ASSA, the use of social science scholarship to help solve public problems. In fact the discipline's first professional journal, the *American Journal of Sociology (AJS),* was founded in 1895 at the request of the University of Chicago's first president, William Rainey Harper, who was "an old Chautauquan . . . deeply committed to spreading knowledge beyond the university walls" (Abbott, 1999: 83). The *AJS* continued the original social science project of producing a comprehensive knowledge of political economy and its discontents, by helping to construct an academic discipline dedicated to this field of inquiry. "The *AJS* spoke to a diverse and constantly changing constituency within this area, one whose core was a small, devoted group aiming to found within the universities a new social knowledge that would nonetheless support active practice." In fact, the journal "played a central role in rallying this core group" (102). While over the course of its first 30 years, the *AJS* would become progressively more specialized and academic, at its inception it was devoted to the practical application of sociological scholarship to public problems.

...the* AJS, *at its inception was devoted to the practical application of sociological scholarship to public problems.

Economics, in its early years, also directly engaged with public problems, although less wholeheartedly than sociology. That is to say, during the highly politicized 1880s and 1890s, an especially fierce battle occurred in the discipline of economics between conservatives and reformers of both liberal and radical persuasions. On the one hand, traditional economists, embracing the growing trend toward "objectivity" in academic scholarship, sought to "separate their subject from moral philosophy by asserting that economics, as a science, had nothing to do with ethics" (Ross, 1993: 91). This position enabled advocates of laissez-faire economics to "applaud the successes of the industrial system without bearing blame for the suffering it caused" (Furner, 1975: 38) — obviously not a politically neutral endeavor. In direct opposition to this approach

to scholarship, however, the "militant" economists, drawing on German critiques of political economy, insisted on making ethical judgments about the market economy and maintained that scientific discussions should consider values as well as facts. While the "objective" approach to economics would ultimately triumph, nevertheless it is important to note that in its early years, the discipline of economics did in fact include scholars whose research focused on the type of ethical concerns characteristic of a vibrant civic discourse.

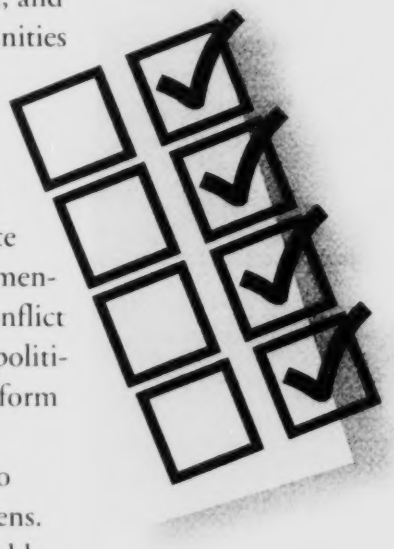
Political science, in its early years, also sought to serve public purposes. Indeed, "the vision of political science that developed in the American university was one that united the field with history and combined civic education and leadership training with a general commitment to the scientific rationalization of society" (Gunnell, 1993: 37). One of the modern discipline's primary founders, John W. Burgess, understood political science as a combination of history, political economy, public law, and public philosophy that should be used to "prepare young men for the duties of public life" and for "all the political branches of public service" (Gunnell, 1993: 51). And again, while the ideal of scientific objectivity would eventually come to overshadow the original commitment to normative political philosophy and civic education, nevertheless, in its early years, political science did in fact have civic aspirations.

Political scientists, like their social science movement forebears, hoped that social science scholarship could be used for the betterment of society. This idealism contributed to their involvement in the "good government" movement that developed at the end of the nineteenth century. While ASSA members had primarily investigated the public problems generated by industrialization, the new political scientists focused on another set of public problems, the shortcomings of America's traditional practice of party patronage. Upset by widespread corruption and the incompetence of many political appointees, these rising research-scholars concluded that the United States needed to produce a new class of civil servants, similar to those of Germany and France, that would use the insights of political science to help them govern for the public good.

However, in the pursuit of "good government," the early political scientists contributed to an ironic situation. That is to say, political scientists, in order to develop as a profession, needed

...to become political experts, academic political scientists would have to usurp the rightful position of democratic citizens.

to establish themselves as authorities over their subject matter, the realm of politics. However, this imperative resulted in an interesting phenomenon because within democratic society the ideal of *popular sovereignty* relegates authority over politics to *citizens* rather than elites. So to become political experts, academic political scientists would, in a sense, have to usurp the rightful position of democratic citizens. So, for example, while the "good government" movement worked to solve public problems by eliminating corruption and institutionalizing an ostensibly meritocratic system of appointment, it simultaneously undermined the sovereignty of the democratic public by standing in opposition to the strong party machines that had been so effective in mobilizing citizens within civil society in general, and within immigrant, working-class communities in particular.



Political scientists established their expertise by playing a key role in the municipal reform movement that sought first to liberate city government from state control and then to "protect" the governmental administration of the city from the conflict of politics. Interestingly, however, when political scientists first became active in this reform effort, they were professionally stymied because they did not have a special role to play; they were just like other active citizens. However, political scientists were finally able to establish their authority, by taking a lead role in the design and construction of an autonomous administrative structure within city government that would deal with urban problems in a "nonpolitical" way. This success helped solidify a distinct sense of professional identity and clear area of expertise for academic political scientists.

Emboldened by their success and vowing to "take the scientific lead in all matters of political interest," the supporters of the municipal reform movement founded the American Political Science Association (APSA) in 1903, in order to pursue the scientific study of politics. Although at first the majority of APSA members were nonacademics, its membership consisted of "good government" advocates, rather than the sorts of social reformers and civic activists who had populated the earlier American Social

Science Association. Nevertheless, the APSA in its early years did embrace a program of social reform — an acceptance of advocacy that would not long survive in the contest with objectivity.

In the end, the disciplines of sociology, economics, and political science, despite their early commitment to bringing social scientific research to bear on the effort to solve public problems, all lost sight of their original reasons for engaging in social science research. Ultimately, over the course of the twentieth century, as these disciplines developed within institutions of higher education, and as scholars increasingly sought funding opportunities from governmental and private foundation sources that demanded impartiality, the ideal of objectivity increasingly eclipsed the civic value of public engagement on which the American Social Science movement was built. In short, academic social science scholarship lost sight of its original civic purposes.

Thinking about the reasons why the American social science movement originally formed and how the early academic scholars continued to address civic concerns in varying ways helps me begin to rethink the role of my own academic scholarship. It's frighteningly easy to get so caught up with the requirements for tenure and promotion that we lose sight of larger, more important issues, like America's civic health. While it may be easier for those of us who do research on the topic of democratic citizenship to remember the public purposes of our academic work, it seems to me that all research-scholars could benefit from grappling seriously with the civic import of their own research agendas. In other words, perhaps we should all start considering the provocative question: What are research-scholars for?

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PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP II

An Interview with Jay Rosen

In the 1996 issue of the *Higher Education Exchange*, coeditor David Brown interviewed journalism professor Jay Rosen, an exemplar of public scholarship arising from his work on public journalism. His recent book, *What Are Journalists For?* chronicles the public journalism movement.

Brown resumed the conversation with Rosen to explore what would have to change for higher education to become a serious participant in rebuilding American public life.

Rosen: The first thing, I think, is not so much a change as a recovery. We start by retrieving from the history of the American academy a civic mission that was there at the start — or at one start, let us say. Thomas Bender makes this clear in his book, *Intellect and Public Life.* He shows that the origins of graduate training have been obscured by the rise of disciplines and the tilt toward science, professionalism, expertise, and the scholarly life of contemplation. At the beginning, however, graduate work in social and political thought was meant to prepare active men — actually gentlemen — for public service. The university should take on the problems of the polity, it was believed, because it could enlighten the people who would meet those problems in government, politics, civil service, journalism, business, and many related domains.

Bender has much to say in critique of this genteel and rather starchy tradition, especially its overt bias against women and the great unwashed. But he leaves no doubt that what we now call the social sciences — the giant enterprise housed in departments and disciplines — began as something else entirely: higher education in the civic arts for those who would have to practice them, in the city and the nation. Intellect and public life were, for a brief moment in institutional history, soulmates.

Any talk of change should start there, between the close of the Civil War and, say, 1896. That is when the inspired (but flawed) vision of a modern "civic academy" first appeared, and was promptly put aside. Bender's image is not one of fall or decline, but of a route unchosen. If we are to find today a more active role in public life, then as good scholars we should return to the fateful

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moment of route selection — and bring our sense of the problem forward from there. What we recover from a derailed project may show us where the rails might have run. Right there is our first map of the problem.

Brown: *If the derailed project, as you call it, shows us where the rails might have run, then what has to change now in higher education to get us back on the right track?*

Rosen: There is no point in rebuilding the academy because it is not "broken" in such a dramatic way. Nor is there any hope of going back to what might have been if the civic vision had won out. Rather, we must concentrate on those points where higher education has lowered its sights and in effect withdrawn from public life. What have been the routes of this withdrawal?

One certainly is the overwhelming dominance of scholarly disciplines and the pressure to define them in ever narrower fashion. I do not think the disciplines will disappear, or that departments will cease to be the home for most academics; and I doubt this would be desirable.

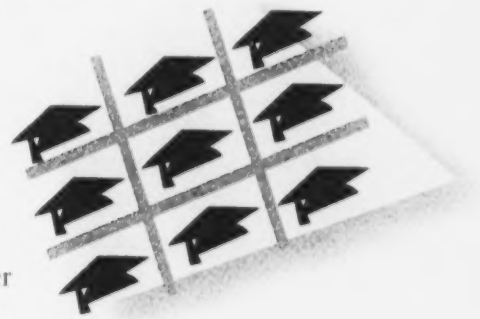
Calls for "interdisciplinary" learning and research are common and helpful as far as they go, but that is not very far. The real question is: How to give scholars and students an additional "home" beyond their discipline, in something more akin to the public square? What might be their natural incentives to find such a home? What sort of institutional support might be required?

Frequently this problem is framed as specialization vs. a more general outlook on higher education. But that too is badly stated, for it's not that we need fewer specialists or experts. We need fewer who are unable to find any other role for themselves, fewer who seek 100 percent of their public identity within a tightly defined and scholarly field.

Harry Boyte of the University of Minnesota uses a phrase I like: Experts on tap, not on top. He regards this as the proper role of specialized learning within the drama of public life. Note how this little formula does not ask experts to forget what they know, or just show up like any citizen off the street. It simply reconfigures the relationship between the trained mind and the public. Being "on tap" for a public that has work to do is an honorable position, but is that an honor the disciplines will recognize on their own? Probably not, until they are refashioned in some way. We will never get anywhere if we ask the learned to become unlettered. What we can do is ask them to be less isolated.

A similar change is overdue within the regime of professionalism that so characterizes the university and American life generally. The professions of the academy are not going to go away, although they are under some severe strains at the moment as the market invades their domain. There needs to be a third alternative, beyond a defensive crouch against invading forces on the one hand, and surrender to a strictly economic calculus on the other. Professional autonomy still needs defense, but that means asking: autonomy for what? Here again, the challenge is to find a home for professionals in the public square that does not require them to check their credentials at the door, but provides another way to "serve" the public interest, in actual dialogue and interaction with the people who are the public.

Professional autonomy still needs defense, but that means asking: autonomy for what?



Professionals need a public life as professionals, not as people who have nothing special to offer but their vote, their checkbook, or a hand raised at a town meeting. They need it because without a more public identity they cannot hope to defend themselves against the many forces eroding their stature and authority. Academic professionals are among the most protected groups we have. But even they depend on reserves of public trust and confidence that cannot be taken for granted. Beyond that, there is the simple fact that every profession is credentialed and chartered in a way that ultimately begins with public service, the public interest, or some other classically public value. What these phrases mean today is up for grabs. But the deepest meaning available in a professional life lies in some renewal of that profession's public life.

So those are some places to start.

Brown: *If I understand your response, reconfiguring the relationship between the trained mind and the public will not be done by invocation but rather the experience of mutuality, and that mutuality develops when there are enough "public" occasions that they can share. Is that why you think the first step is asking academics to be less isolated?*

Rosen: In a word, yes. Scholars are not "isolated" in the sense of being out of touch with current realities. On the contrary, they tend to have better models for understanding the present

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world, and how it got that way. Their isolation, if we can hazard such a charge, involves one of Dewey's central concerns: What portion of the intelligence they command is either shared with the public, or available to public life as we seek to remake it? Dewey treated "intelligence" as a social good, unevenly distributed across the terrain. He was always asking whether an intelligent "state of affairs" existed, rather than asking if these people or those programs were smart enough.

For a simple illustration recall the Savings and Loan scandal — a stupid state of affairs, presided over by some very smart people. It was Richard Rorty who several years later asked: Where were the deans of the business schools, the economics professors, the experts in banking, government oversight, regulation, Congress? What did they have to say — not to each other, but to the country, while this massive theft was under way? Rorty goes on to ask: Where was the press, which is supposed to be sounding the alarm? And then he gets to Dewey's question: Why didn't these two forms of social intelligence — academic expertise, journalistic awareness — come together and alert the rest of America to the danger?

But that is an exceptional case, a crisis in the financial house. In quieter times, academics need more forums in which they have to meet the public (and its problems), but on relatively "public" grounds. It might be as simple as a speak-out on an urgent public problem, in the grand style of the sixties' teach-in. But we will probably have to work harder than that in finding the proper occasions. The more the public (and its discourse) is welcomed into the academic house, the more the academy leaves its home for travel into public, and the more "experts on tap, not on top" gets embraced and explored, the greater the benefits of mutuality on the trained mind. Intellect and public life, to take the two halves of Tom Bender's title, improve one another. We have to build an academy in which this is commonly recognized to be so.

Brown: *Could you offer some examples of how such "public" occasions might come about and elaborate on the experiential learning that might occur?*

Rosen: Take what is now known as the "digital divide." We

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are moving to a wired world, but many who are not in the educated classes seem to get left behind. This is not good for civic cohesion, economic prosperity, democratic politics, and other aspirations we have for ourselves — like a decent education for all.

So, which campus is prepared to work with what local community to make that place the most well connected (well wired) in the land? Meaning not only that "everyone who wants to be on-line can get there" but the public capacity found on-line, for virtually all segments of the community, is high. Vital work is done there, the community is knit more closely together, people are able to participate, civic challenges are easier to meet because of the way people communicate in a particular locale that is wired well for public life. Whether cyberspace will eventually be "wired for democracy" is an immense social challenge, not solvable by the university, on the one hand, or the community on the other, unless they get together with a lot of others.

...academic learning can be of urgent value to the public, but not until it learns to "go public...."

Were such a thing to happen — and it probably is, somewhere — the dividends paid to scholarly knowledge would be great. For to be of genuine public service in a community seeking to overcome its digital divide, (and thus make a workable public space out of cyberspace) it will be necessary to engage with that community and all its institutions. Every such encounter is of high value to intellect and academic learning, and when that fact is recognized, academic learning can be of urgent value to the public, but not until it learns to "go public" without somehow substituting itself for the polity.

Brown: *Are there examples from your own work that are instructive?*

Rosen: Public journalism, a small reform movement in the American press, was helped by having a link to academic work on journalism and the public sphere, to Dewey in fact — though it received the inevitable catcalls about ivory tower teachings. But my real point is that academic work on democracy and the press was helped by having a link to public journalism, a movement that had to prove itself in the newsroom and on the page, while in front of the entire community. Do Dewey's ideas make sense and still matter? Try to reach journalists with them and you have a different way to find out. This is all I mean by overcoming isolation. Find more public proving grounds for what is normally treated as scholarly work.

Brown: *Are disciplinary and professional associations needed to*

create these public occasions or push their members in that direction? Do you think they will?

Rosen: They are needed because they communicate what it means to be an engaged and successful professional in their respective fields. Until the rituals that unite professionals in a fraternal bond include engagement with the public life of our time — and I do not mean lobbying or special pleading — then the relevant associations will not be civic associations, too. Whatever intelligence is embodied there will be lost to the public square.

I doubt that most doctors feel they have contributed what they can to the health care and insurance crises, though they certainly feel victimized by them. Their problem is not the lack of a lobbying presence. Nor is it a lack of knowledge. It is their weak alignment to citizens, leaders, and public discussion generally. It seems to me that the associations — existing or new — are the logical place for experiment and reform here. But why shouldn't higher education, which credentials these people, be involved with that? It might learn something very useful.

Brown: *Thank you, Jay.*

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LEAVING THE HIGH GROUND

By David W. Brown

> *There is a high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and there is a swampy lowland where situations are confusing "messes" incapable of technical solution. The difficulty is that the problems of the high ground, however great their technical interest, are often relatively unimportant to clients or the larger society, while in the swamp are the problems of greatest human concern.*
>
> — Schon, The Reflective Practitioner

What is still missing from too many of higher education's catalogues is the laboratory or clinic or workshop experience of working with real-world problems and with the real-world people who are the critical resource for resolving them. In Schon's "swampy lowland," I call them "learning labs."

I can think of two good reasons why learning labs are the exception, not the rule in higher education. The first is practical. They require more time and effort than most professors are able or willing to spend on any one course. And those who are able and willing often suffer early burnout. When it goes well, a learning lab offers big rewards for students but it can be a big pain in the neck for their professor. It is a little like a course you teach "on-line" with the unexpected becoming the norm. You can't account for what will happen.

The second reason is less obvious but more compelling. Most professors, and many of their students, prefer a substantial measure of *control* in the delivery of a course. The authority resides with the professor both as to the content and the grading that measures how well the content is understood. It is unsettling, to say the least, to enter a dynamic environment where students and their professor interact with real-world problems and everyday folks who may pay little heed to academic decorum and hierarchy, and whose collaboration and the outcomes produced are just as likely to challenge as to confirm academic expectations.

The "time and effort" reason is for each professor to weigh for himself or herself. What I can do here is to make the case that when students become "co-creators" with others outside the classroom (to use Harry Boyte's lovely phrase), an instructor should not feel that anyone has been cheated. Whatever temporary norms govern such interaction and whatever outcomes emerge, the learning lab experience prepares students for community problem solving, something that the classroom rarely does. Too often,

> *We establish competitive, rather than cooperative learning environments where students are tested on their individual abilities to be self-sufficient ...[even though] our experience in organizations and communities, where little gets accomplished without collaboration with others, makes clear how few lessons of the "real world" are included in the classroom.*
>
> — Brown, When Strangers Cooperate

Recently I reread Mitch Resnick's wonderful little book, *Turtles, Termites, and Traffic Jams*, which describes his MIT Media Lab work with high school students to create new types of computer simulations and to overcome what he calls the "centralized mind-set." Resnick says,

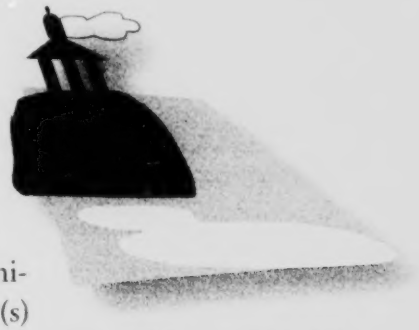
> *Our intuitions about systems in the world are deeply influenced by our conceptions of ourselves. According to modern cognitive theories, our minds are composed of thousands of interacting entities, but we experience ourselves as singular selves. This is a very convenient, perhaps necessary, illusion for surviving in the world.... It feels like there is one entity in charge: me. So it is quite natural that I should expect most systems to involve a central actor or a single entity that is in charge.*

Such a mind-set helps to explain why the authority of a discipline and its "professors" shape the expectations of students of how best to learn. When democracy is at work, however, it has no centralized mind-set. Resnick foresees that

> *As decentralized ideas infiltrate the culture — through new technologies, new organizational structures, new scientific ideas — people will undoubtedly begin to think in new ways.*
>
> — Resnick, Turtles, Termites, and Traffic Jams

Learning labs are one way to lessen the distance between the academy's high centralized ground and democracy's "swampy lowland." And students and instructors just may "think in new ways."

A "learning lab" is not strictly a practicum — the application of previously studied theory — but rather focuses on learning from a community of interest and then learning to work with such a community. Imagine a "community innovation lab" organized to bring together members of a community, students, and their professor(s) to explore new ways to improve literacy, child care, or public spaces. No one is in charge. If the "centralized mind-set" exists, it is bound to be seriously confused. Instead, the lab is like an "outward-bound" undertaking with strangers where familiarity and a degree of trust has to be established before any progress can be made. It is a marvelous opportunity for everyone to develop their "democratic skills."



Most people who become skilled in organizational and community life develop an inquiring and strategic mind. They are people who learn as much as they can about the human environment in which they find themselves. They are people who do not take for granted that their values or their methodologies are trump cards in the social interaction necessary to solve problems. They understand that no one is in control of most problematic situations, that participants' preferences conflict, and that their choices are interdependent. They are people who constantly look for new allies, court old ones, and build support for whatever is worth doing. They get where they are going with the help of others.

A learning lab puts students in a strategic situation where their preferences will very likely compete or conflict with those they work with. I tell my students —

> *It is not enough to think you know what the problem is. It also matters what the other participants think the problem is. It is not enough to think you know what the solution is. It also matters if the other participants think that your solution fits their conception of what the problem is. And even if your solution does, it is possible that they may think they have better solutions than yours. You suffer a considerable disadvantage when you are not able to get out of yourself and into another participant's shoes. You are handicapped not only by egocentricity, but by the mistaken belief, perhaps fostered by too much education, that an objective analysis of a situation is more important than*

how it appears subjectively to others.

I ask them to suspend their own preferences, anticipate the likely preferences of others, concede the differences, and acknowledge that "what works for me has to work for others, too." The ability to anticipate what others prefer and how they may act does not dictate what a student will do with such impressions, but I have found that their vicarious experience of putting themselves in the other person's shoes is more likely to bridge the gap between them than to exacerbate their differences. Whatever the outcome, I want my students to put aside their naiveté of thinking that the "right answer" or the "right values" will or should prevail. They may think that right answers and values are enough to prevail on an exam or in a term paper, but it is not likely to happen in the real world where answers and values are likely to be contested.

Given the preoccupation with individual development that pervades our education system, developing "democratic skills" is, as Resnick puts it, "to think in new ways." The solo performance of the freestanding rational individual has been the dominant norm in many classrooms with the unfortunate implication that deference is owed to anyone who thinks better than another. Too often it produces a "professional" conceit that is antithetical to the workings of democracy.

Furthermore, we should welcome any opportunity that engages students in context-driven, not just model-driven, learning. For example, the rational choice model so prevalent in the social sciences, is centered on the thinking realm of individual players rather than the behavioral realm where social exchange has different and often unpredictable dimensions. The rational choice model of choosing the best means to achieve a fixed end does not try to account for "expressive behavior," — altruism, fairness, group solidarity, intergroup conflict — which is standard fare in democratic venues.

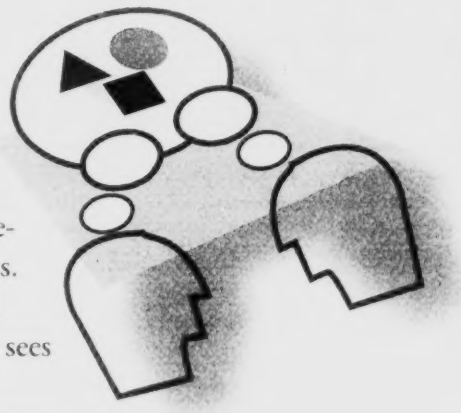
...we should welcome any opportunity that engages students in context-driven, not just model-driven, learning.

The same is true of game theory, the formal study of rational expectations in interdependent situations, which models decision makers without individual identities or a specific social context in which their choices are made. It simplifies, like all workable models do, and captures some important dynamics of competition, conflict, and cooperation, but is unreliable in predicting players' behavior in any given context.

There are just too many variables in a learning lab for such models to account for. All the better. It frees up students and professors to experience how things evolve in a dynamic environment

that is bound to challenge some of the assumptions of their academic modeling.

Many scholars who are pursuing the study of complex adaptive systems, looking at trade, migration, public health, the transmission of culture among others, do not deny the freestanding rational individual but put him into play, so to speak, with countless others. This is what a learning lab does for students. Let them become engaged with the communities in which they will live and work; let them experience the challenge of thinking *with* others rather than using a professional credential to think *for* them; let them take part in the search, trial and error, and process of discovery that any community of interest goes through before knowing what to do about its problems; let them appreciate that what emerges is a collaborative product, neither predictable nor merely the sum of individual contributions.



Brian Arthur, an economist and student of complex adaptive systems, sees that

> *We are beginning to lose our innocence, or naiveté, about how the world works. As we begin to understand complex systems, we begin to understand that we're part of an ever-changing, interlocking, nonlinear, kaleidoscopic world.*
>
> — Waldrop, Complexity

Experiencing how a democratic world works is a good place to start for students. What better reason for calling it a "learning" lab.

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THE PACKAGED SELF, MODERN AND POSTMODERN PERSONS IN LATE CAPITALIST TIMES:

The Challenge to Higher Education

By Mary B. Stanley

Revisit two TV advertisements. If you watch commercial TV (and unfortunately at times even if you only watch public) you've seen plenty like them. One features a clear crisp, male voice-over listing the strategic steps the attractive older couple on the screen have taken to arrive at their charming wood-shingled retirement cottage on a pristine lake. The other ad is a garble of fast, disorienting images and scene changes that may or may not be a car commercial. The first reeks of substance, the second style. The first I would argue is designed to signal sober modernity, the second playful postmodernism.

There are at least two distinctive views of the person as we begin the twenty-first century. One is rooted in the modern, the other the postmodern. This article is an exploration of the implications for both higher education and for citizenship of these two views of the person. The implications for higher education will come at the end although I think it will be clear earlier in my argument what they might be. The implications for citizenship are scattered throughout my analysis. It is easier to begin with a description of the modern self.

The Modern Person

The roots of modern personal identity as we know it today lie in the Enlightenment tradition of reason. The justification for democracy itself rests on the belief that the self is rational, and can be educated to understand the relationship of the self to the political community of which it is a member. Such an understanding of self and democracy presumes that the world is tentatively knowable, that social, political, and economic life is modestly lawlike and that a satisfactory human existence lies in the individual pursuit of happiness. This Lockean view of the person has always had

its critics. To romantics, it eviscerated the passionate and poetic. To conservatives, it ignored the irrational basis of faith and the blood/kinship/ethnic bonds that hold peoples together and give meaning to individual identity.

Even within the tradition of reason, Marx reminded us that the person is not born squatting outside of history but has a social and historical dimension banished in the rush to celebrate liberal individualism.

Further, outside the critique of the left, the modern rational, interest-pursuing self has been undermined by the very skepticism that liberated the person from the magic and mystery of absolutist religion and government. The emancipatory project of freeing persons from barriers and unchosen bonds of all sorts, has gone ever deeper into the origins of the self. Constraints might be found not only in the weight of tradition and the oppression of a political regime, but in the intrapsychic terrain initially explored by Freud. It was not so much that the modern project of reason in the service of emancipation was over, but rather the more barriers to human freedom we overcame, the more we discovered. Yet there remain many today who see in the rational, preference-bearing, interest-pursuing individual the primary, if not only, meaning of freedom. Perhaps such beliefs are no more obvious than in the almost suffocating language of the marketplace.

The overt advertising on TV, radio, and in print, for such a conception of the individual presumes a sturdy nineteenth-century view of prosperity and persons rooted in the rational management by self and society of the material, commercial world. The Sunday morning news/political chat shows are interrupted with reminders that such selves must manage their fates through the strategic deployment of investment resources over a life span. A series of competent and wise experts will assist the individual. Without such tutelage, the person is left bereft of health, future, and happiness. Rationality may have to reach a level of expertise unattainable by most mortals, but the assumption remains that persons are sufficiently rational to comprehend the need for it. More and more sectors of human experience and practice have been colonized by this view of the rational, autonomous, calculating agent. The self may have several roles — consumer, stockholder, worker — but they are all dominated by a view of the person as integrated at her core through participation in a market economy. True there may be hidden, private patches of oddness and eccentricity, but the self of

history, one's own and collective, is a rational economic agent.

One of my favorite ads reflective of this modern, rational/economic view of the self is the one where a sweet son, who has "his mother's eyes," is gazed on lovingly by his father as the boy swims innocently off a raft. The vulnerability of the thin child is the goad to purchase additional insurance. Meaning, one supposes, that without his father's rational decision to lard on the insurance, that sweet boy would starve. No excuse for not knowing the way the wind blows.

The language of late postindustrial capitalism can sound reassuring if cold. Market globalization supposedly follows neoliberal economic rules. Individuals can choose to starve among their pretty traditions, or strategically deploy their social or literal capital, however modest. The global market reveals what it wants from persons; persons provide it or accept the consequences. Rational planning can address the predictable bump and swap of capitalism's creative destruction.

There is, of course, a modern self that resists the all-out ascendance of market values, assumptions, and practices. Some modernists, such as Jürgen Habermas, do not believe that the project of reason is limited to the spheres of the state or the market, but may catalyze a democracy worthy of its more participatory, emancipatory, and justice-minded ideals. Past and continuing efforts to engage a rational but multidimensional citizenry bleed through the flat narrative of persons as capitalist workers, owners, or consumers. Sharp, colorful tales of emancipation from slavery, nativism, sexism, ethnic or class oppression suggest that reason has been a helpmate to the passion for a just and fair polity beyond market justice.

As the American polity grew more complex, the modernist view of persons, at times more generous, at times more narrow, seemed to work. Jane Addams and John Dewey could celebrate a rational, learning, segmented, ethnically rich and diverse citizenry without fundamentally challenging the view of the person as rational agent, though a democratic education might be necessary to produce her. Dewey and Addams' acceptance of both democracy and knowledge as processes informed by pragmatism's skepticism toward apriori truths was nonetheless governed by a view of reason as able to discern credible claims about the world, however open-ended and tentative. And those claims and insights could be the basis for collective and individual action.

Dewey and Addams' goal of self and collective discovery was not limited by the acceptance of the one-dimensional, calculating self of the market, but it was also not the fragmented, fully fluid self celebrated by some at the turn of this millennium.

The Postmodern Self

...the postmodern person is conceptually messy.

Because the modern self may appear more familiar in both its guises — emancipatory, democratic and neoliberal economic — I will take more time to discuss the postmodern self. This is also the case because, unlike the tidy images of the person as rational agent, the postmodern person is conceptually messy. Partly this is so because many who espouse postmodernism view it as a continuation, albeit in a very different form, of the emancipatory ideal of modernism. Born modernists, How do you abandon your parents without just a wee bit of guilt to contaminate your clarity? Because much has been written and with much detail about postmodernism, the following may seem to ignore postmodernism's subtlety or promise as a language of the self. But my point is not to explicate postmodernism so much as to move my argument toward an examination of the role of higher education in supporting and shaping the person according to two different visions of the self.

Postmodernism and modernism can be compared in terms of their social, political, and aesthetic implications.[1] For my purposes, I'll begin my analysis with a focus on the postmodern aesthetic. Not as a theory of aesthetics but as one of the more obvious ways that postmodernism has entered public life. Yes, postcolonial theory and multiculturalism might be viewed as allies of social and political postmodernism. And, they may well be seen as even more visible manifestations of postmodernism, at least on college campuses. However, I think the aesthetic dimension of postmodernism is the form of postmodernism most easily co-opted by neoliberal market ideologies and the version most easily accepted by those outside the academy as safe to integrate into higher education and useful in creating the educated self. Playful visual anachronisms suit a bored elite in ways that the multicultural and postcolonial challenges to reimagine the margins and center, not only of physical places and cultures, but of the self, do not. (Although later I will argue that even multiculturalism can be assimilated to late capitalism.)

Returning to commercials. Imagine the pleasure an art histo-

[1] Henry Giroux, in a tightly argued chapter, "Rethinking the Boundaries of Educational Discourse: Modernism, Postmodernism and Feminism," in *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope* Boulder: Westview Press, 1997, contrasts modernism and postmodernism. I strongly recommend the chapter and the book.

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ry major takes in deftly juxtaposing iconic images in a visually layered commercial; a flash of Byzantine sacred there, a glimmer of Animism here, a Jungian archetype prowling the background. Fear, horror, awe, down-shift the holy to sell technology and high-end consumables. How flattering for the worldly wise postmodern consumer to "get it." Perhaps the twenty-first century consumer will become trained to accept that if she doesn't "get it," she has a limited, modern self, condemned to purchase the mundane commodities available at Wal-Mart. In contrast, the postmodern consumer, a flexible fluid self, educated to be a culture shaper not shaped, can consume the pricey, beautiful and excellent, however loose and shifting the meaning of beauty and excellence might be.

Postmodernism's critical aesthetic edge supposedly will keep disrupting such co-optations, undermining the use of culture, high and pop, as sites for domination. But I'm not so sure. The basis of production in a postmodern, infotainment, techno-communication world privileges the playful transformation of selves. It does so without necessitating, perhaps even undermining, the critical emancipatory project of modernism. For example, place, with its tendency to ground identity and position persons in time for good or ill (the Balkans come to mind in this regard) becomes less meaningful to an educated, info-techno elite that skitters around the world dipping into and out of local cultures like a trip to the Ponderosa buffet. Obviously, even the ordinary kid down the block can E-chat up her neighbor in Holland about Industrial Dark music and feel a kinship not shared with the "Docker" boy next to her in social studies.

In both cases, the slick surface of cyberspace masks how the material world remains a site for the domination of many. People worldwide still labor in dangerous mines, in sweat shops, and in poorly ventilated, unsafe factories. It obscures how physical nature must absorb the speed-up pace of a consuming world. While the ecological impact of production and consumption in countries throughout the world is becoming evermore obvious to some, that insight hardly seems a brake on fantasies of continued and accelerated worldwide consumption. Finally cyberspace hides the bodies not just of those dancing the net but those of many who are under siege by diseases such as

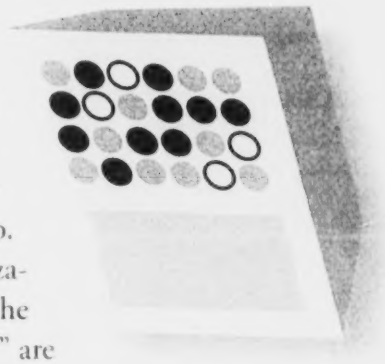
AIDS, linked in Africa and elsewhere to social fragmentation abetted by vast migrations of persons in search of capitalist wage labor.

The recent merger of AOL and Time Warner has been consciously framed by its combined managerial class as "shaping people's lives." I would say not just lives, but identity(ies), selves and views of "reality." Yes, the Internet and future info/commu/tainment might become what Ivan Illich would term "convivial tools" able to be used not just to dominate and domesticate the powerless but used by the powerless to resist the powerful or for their own purposes. Conspiracy theories of the down and out fly across the Web and grassroots groups can be mobilized to descend on the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle. But my fear is that the virtual world will become more and more the site for abstracted identities to play and shift, not for politics.

The celebration of play by postmodern aesthetes, is already the experience of many on the net. Yes, we are charmed by the idea that, on the net, markers of identity, onerous in the physical world, disappear. The apocryphal tale of the inner-city child awed by the open manner in which he, unburdened by race or class or gender, is received in cyber worlds, is seductive. Why not all log on and play at being?

In a recent article in *Contemporary Sociology*, "Cyberspace and Identity," Sherry Turkle notes regarding the use of the Internet, that "For many people, such experiences challenge what they have traditionally called 'identity,' which they are moved to recast in terms of multiple windows and parallel lives." Turkle first encountered the idea of multiplicity of selves within selves in the work of theorists later linked to postmodernism. Initially she, like many, found troubling the possibility that the autonomous, bounded self might be a modernist illusion. She thought such a claim unconvincing at the level of theory and discounted at the level of experience. Only 20 years later, when she was on-line, did theory "shockingly" match experience. "I used language to create several characters. My textual actions are my actions — my words make things happen. I created selves that were made and transformed by language. And different personae were exploring different aspects of the self."

Implicit in this view of cyberworld as theoretical postmodernism's practice, is an awareness that such self-reflectivity must be cultivated. If not, like the computer HAL in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, our tools can take on a life of their own. They can "shape people's



lives" and people's views of their self(ves), society, and even the nature of their minds. Turkle's mature postmodern self is really brave. It communicates with all its aspects, without a rigid ego snipping away at ambiguity, doubt, and existential vertigo. Turkle finds such shifts in the conceptualization of the self in psychoanalysis as well. The days of privileging the ego and a "core self" are over. The goal of parenting and socialization is to help "a child develop the capacity to negotiate fluid transitions between self states."

Turkle's goal of a reflectively competent self is admirable. But I'm not very comfortable with the vision of the person as totally "free," able to relocate easily in time, place, social location without the least discomfort. Late capitalism needs not just bodies able to move fast to new sites of material production but minds able to shift and flow with capital and its need for "brain power."

It also needs consumers open to the flow of commodities — cultural and material — that wash over national and cultural boundaries as if they were mere ineffective breakers in a hurricane sea. Here's a description of a slice of the postmodern late capitalist world. The place is Khao-San a Bangkok neighborhood fully integrated into a postmodern cyber/physical/culture "commodifying" world. The young adventurer on the move no longer discovers coherent, bounded cultures but a pastiche of "commodified" cultural markers, simultaneously linked to a cyber/media world that floats above it all. The postmodern self is at home.

> *One morning ... I stopped in to check my E-mail at Khao-San Cyber Home, a computer center set a few paces back from the sidewalk beside a stand of banana trees and a fish-pond full of carp. On the street, the open-air Siam Oriental Inn was blasting a Swedish-dubbed version of* The Phantom Menace *on wide-screen TV, while across the way, Buddy Beer, also open-air and also maximum volume, was showing* Wild, Wild West, *and at the big bootleg-cassette booth next door an early Santana album screeched out of tinny speakers. The sounds collided like a car wreck, and even early in the day, warm air smelled like Michelob and pad thai.*
>
> Letter From Bangkok, Susan Orlean, New Yorker 1/17/00:39

The Role of Higher Education in Shaping Identity

What are the implications for higher education of this shift or at least tension between two different views of the self? I am arguing that the way the material and increasingly postmaterial world is organized, and for whom, sets the boundaries of what might be viewed as a legitimate role for higher education. Postmodernists might say that that is exactly the problem. I might be accused by them of having given in to the idea of boundaries as if natural or unable to be challenged. To some extent I have, but my goal is to explore how higher education might already be accommodating itself to these two views. But that accommodation does not necessarily serve the project of emancipating persons and peoples from unjust and unchosen burdens, imposed identities, and avoidable suffering on either modernist or postmodern terms.

Any curriculum carries with it a history and bundle of assumptions. In these few pages, I cannot deconstruct higher education's present multiple curricula, interdisciplinary programs, and academic disciplines to reveal the way in which some of them tip toward the modern and others the postmodern self. Readers may have theories about how all this plays out. On the campus where I taught for many years the "English Department" became "Textual Studies" after lots of "discourse."

But what I can do is suggest how higher education as an institutional sector seems to be responding to the pooling of assumptions regarding personal identity into two views of the person. I think it does so in a way that safely domesticates the emancipatory power of both modernism and postmodernism.

This does not mean that there are no faculty committed to various versions of the emancipatory project. Quite the contrary. Many are. Articulate, thoughtful faculty continually offer their students and the public at large, research, insights, forms of service in alignment with views of the self and democracy that suggest the project of freedom, dignity, and universal human rights is hardly over.

Why doesn't this steady emphasis on critical study of self, society, polity, and economy mark higher education in the public's mind or move a democratic citizenry exposed to both modern and postmodern critiques of power, to action in the name of critical democratic ideals? I believe that the dominant ideology of late capitalism — neoliberalism — preempts the power of either modern or postmodern theorizing and critique to inspire thought or action.

Higher Education and the Modern Self

The idea of sovereignty resting in the people was liberating.

One important aspect of modernism was its democratic aspirations. Persons freed from the claims of monarchy moved from being subjects to democratic citizens. The idea of sovereignty resting in the people was liberating. Citizens became agents not just crafting their own fates but agents responsible for the collective destiny of the polity. True, democratic participation has always been problematic. Formally excluded groups had to struggle long and well to earn even the most basic civic rights. Further, the actual organization of society, its institutions and practices, often seemed actively opposed to democratic ideals.

Nonetheless, higher education supposedly is and has been party to the political project of cultivating democratic citizenship. I won't recapitulate the various ways higher education has seemingly honored that responsibility over time but I will say that, right now, the language and practice of higher education as an institution has acquiesced to an image of self-sovereignty but a sovereignty of the individual as consumer/worker/investor, not necessarily as democratic citizen. Each retreat from curricula designed to enhance critical *democratic* thinking, each failure to place the student in a big picture and then (nodding to postmodernism) to help her understand the flaws and limits of big pictures, is a move away from democratic citizenship as critical agency. This is especially so when that space left open is filled with majors and programs specifically designed to meet the labor or research demands of a market economy.

It is harsh perhaps to single out any one institution, since students as consumers and the corporate world as future employers of those students is ever present to administrators throughout the country. But I must give an example. In the fall/winter 1999 newsletter for alumni and friends of SUNY Stony Brook the front page carries the header, "Strengthening the Bond Between Academics and Industry — Vice President of Economic Development appointed — first ever at a research university." The justification of and hopes regarding the position are summarized by the new appointee:

> *By creating this vice presidency, the University has sent an important signal of its intensified commitment to our regional and state economies. . . . This position is a means to strengthen and build upon existing programs, create new partnerships with industry and government, and most*

importantly, to identify major new opportunities and develop crucial new resources to achieve global competitiveness.

This is a university fully aware of its environment, keenly attuned to the "show me the money" justification for publicly funded research universities. But even when an institution declares itself an ally of critical thought and democratic citizenship, the larger context may inoculate students against it.

Efforts to encourage students to confront the way in which institutions and structures limit the human agency of some can easily collapse into a language and practice that may enrich the self but not in a way suitable to citizenship. I'll give one example from what is called service learning. Service learning practitioners invite students through courses with a service component or through extracurricular community service projects, to learn from their service experience in a variety of ways. Service learning practitioners often discover that although students may cherish the emotional power that comes from witnessing human tragedy and suffering, may even wish to end such suffering, they seldom spontaneously ask critical, political, or structural questions regarding its causes. Cultivation of that capacity is not easy in a larger context where human suffering is presented as resulting from the internal pathologies of family life, individual bad choices, or genetic flaws. Such explanations of human suffering with their emphasis on apolitical or individualistic causes serve the interests of those who prosper from late capitalism and reflect the ideological orientation of neoliberalism. In contrast, institutional and structural causes may appear to the young as mere excuses or invitations to slacking.

Those students who are politically active may appear as a quaint, noisy minority locked in a tie-dyed timewarp on campuses where students speak with ease regarding the k's in starting salaries and select majors accordingly. It does not surprise me that in the 1998 annual survey of attitudes and characteristics of freshman, only 4.2 percent could imagine themselves as participating in student protests or demonstrations, only 16 percent consider influencing the political structure essential or very important while 74 percent believe being very well-off financially is. And who can blame them? The bull is running and seems like it will never stop. But beyond that there is a low-level buzz of anxiety as young people are reminded through the media, advertising, and popular culture that the "on your own world" means just that. To them there may well be no polity of care and concern, interested in their

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dignity and human flourishing for all. No Social Security, no Medicare, no Welfare when or if they need them. The modern self in 2000 had better organize its portfolio at 20, having played stock investment games at 12, and created its own Web-based business at 16. As Hewlett-Packard says in a recent clever commercial showing little kids displaying their inventions, Hey Kid. Want a job? Perhaps the ideal is, like Bill Gates, to drop higher education altogether and cut right to the chase.

With everyone seeming to accept that there just *are* winners and losers and that the gap between is growing, it is hardly surprising to find that young people are alert to how they must sculpt their selves in ways that fit the parameters of market demand. As future workers, they struggle to position themselves as part of a knowledge elite or at least as workers in the techno/info/tainment production process. As consumers, they are attuned to the pleasures and codes of fashion and style.

The modern project of the self, often the partner of economic liberalization, is becoming primarily the project of producing economic man/woman. A university or college that doesn't acknowledge the pressures and seductions of the marketplace on students and design its practices accordingly, might well experience itself, not as virtuously committed to democratic ideals, but as irresponsible. It takes a certain conscious courage to institutionally resist the market. Why do it? Because the modern project of freeing the self has meant, to many, critically challenging powerful institutions. Even the market. Many of those past critics and rabble-rousers are now considered our heroes and heroines. We as a political community are simply better for them and their collective labors.

Capitalism in its present form is not the end of history. If it is, it is an odd utopia. In modernist terms, we have yet to fulfill the Enlightenment promise of emancipation, equality, and equal dignity to all selves. Human suffering proceeds apace both here in the United States and clearly abroad. There is much left to do. The inspiration to do it must come from a critical skepticism cultivated through education. Time spent consumed by work, consumption, and investment strategizing is time spent away from the public square. One thread of modernism, hair-thin at times though it may have been, was the project of solidarity. That ideal of fraternity forced(s) us to ask critical questions about how some persons become losers. It disposes us to be most skeptical of

answers provided by winners.

Higher education as an institutional sector increasingly supports a narrowing version of the modern self. I think it does so in a way that threatens to become totalizing. All the shifts, moves, and reallocations of resources large and small, that institutions of higher education do to adapt to and accommodate the power of market institutions are signals and invitations to students to do the same.

Higher Education and the Postmodern Self

What of the postmodern self? How does higher education respond to those same market pressures as they entice persons not to be rigid, dutiful, and strategic but playful, open, and fluid? One might assume that higher education cannot prepare a person for both a postmodern and modern world. And, in truth, I think that some sectors of higher education are under more pressure to be solely part of the production of the modern self as defined by the market in its rational, calculating sense. Community colleges primarily promote themselves as a conduit to a good job, no matter their other, more humanistic and democratic agendas. They set up curricula, programs, and courses like short inventory. "Educational Products" here today, gone tomorrow depending on local or regional corporate need.

But I don't believe that higher education in general is resistant to cultivating the postmodern self. As discussed above, late capitalism needs the postmodern self at least for some. A managerial elite, imperialists of late capitalism, need not be white, male, and Anglo-Saxon. Multiculturalism, an important dimension of postmodern thought, need not be the enemy of late capitalism. An anecdote that may reveal: when in Berlin in the mid-nineties, my suspicions regarding the fate of multiculturalism were reinforced. In a cafe, at a table next to my husband and me, were eight young people in their late twenties, early thirties. All worked for a well-known multinational soft drink company. They were from all races and several nationalities. Men and women; they all spoke English. They were discussing the various packages and perks they got from the corporation. One that seemed more significant to them than others was that the corporation would fly them out and guarantee their safety should there be political unrest where they were "stationed." I felt as if I were listening to the British discuss India in the 1920s. But without hearing what they were saying, one might assume that globalization was cheerfully chugging along, making

the world not just better and better, but happily destroying barriers of race, gender, and ethnicity (if decidedly NOT class). When Jesse Jackson shifts his energies from the Rainbow Coalition of the down and dismissed to the Wall Street Project of the rainbow winners, it's clear that multiculturalism as a dimension of postmodern criticism can be redirected in ways supportive of neoliberalism.

Russell Jacoby makes a similar argument in the recently published, *End of Utopia*. Universities teaching diversity may claim that they have taken the best of postmodernism's critique and, in their support of a diverse student body, created the beginnings of a diverse and fair polity, perhaps new global world order. But I doubt it. Yes, within academic departments there may be plenty of faculty saying, No that's not what we meant. But that's what is heard. Playful, generous, multiculturalism at the level of elites is appealing. It's not all that different from international bodies of scholars happily meeting at watering holes throughout the world. Privilege is privilege.

The more edgy forms of postmodern theory may be experienced not as an invitation to assess critically the use of language as a form of domination and metanarratives of historical progress as problematic. Rather, students might view them as fun courses that undermine their elders' sanctimony regarding hope and progress altogether. Such courses and theoretical orientations might most appeal to those students comfortable with play as an aspect of the self. Slipping the bonds and baggage of modernism, some students might discover that late capitalism has plenty of room for the wacky, the weakly integrated, creative selves who love to float and change and reinvent themselves. For those whose various selves think "outside the box," bring the aesthetic vigor of pastiche and the inventiveness of multiplicity to their labors, there's a fun job waiting for them with flexible, if intense, hours. The Hewlett-Packard commercial cited above, is not about children in a literal sense but about the child in us that postmodern theories of the self invite to return as a cherished, ever-present fragment of the multiplicity of selves freed from modern, linear narratives of adulthood and history. Such a self is not unpolitical. It is without politics. Politics has an earthy dimension, a rootedness in time, place, and actual lives that can seem frankly boring.

True, popular culture has become a site for developing a critique of late capitalism on the part of those who have attempted

...the first step is to become ever more aware, of how the self is being produced and constituted....

to move postmodernism in a political direction. And yes, some threads of feminism have wedded postmodernism with a politics of possibility and action grounded in the everyday experiences of persons. But it's hard work and demands a practice in both the chat rooms of the Modern Language Association and the messy streets of actual communities. In the anarchic vineyards of the pop culture industries and the weird world of "zines."

Conclusion

So what can be done? I think the first step is to become ever more aware, encouraging others in higher education, in the streets and in the board rooms beyond to become ever more aware as well, of how the self is being produced and constituted in this odd time and under the conditions of late capitalism. And, further, to become aware of the complicity of institutions, including higher education, in that project.

The project of the self has been a conscious aspect of what we cherish in the Enlightenment myth of reason. Without postmodernism, we would not be aware of the hubris of that last statement. But being aware of both the flaws and triumphs of modernism, and of the wily power of postmodernism to open spaces and hear new voices and of the continuing reality of unnecessary human suffering, we must ask how the selves we are producing are made fit for politics. And for what politics? Under what visions of the good society will future generations march? What stories will they care to hear? For what shared ideals will they be willing to act? Will the modern self collapse into fear, nativism, and the certitude of fundamentalisms of all sorts? Will the postmodern self become talented Mr. Ripleys, illusive and amoral, cruel in the pleasure of their adaptability, able to layer on identities and strip them off at will? And most troubling for democrats, which identities, aspects, states, or parts of future selves will bear the responsibility for sustaining the democratic project?

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PUBLIC WORK:

An Interview with Harry Boyte

Higher Education Exchange coeditor David Brown asked Harry Boyte to discuss the linkage between democracy and higher education with particular attention to the concept of "public work" as practiced by the Center for Democracy and Citizenship where he is codirector. Boyte is also a senior fellow at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, and the author of numerous books and articles including *CommonWealth* (1989), *Free Spaces* (1986, coauthored with Sara M. Evans), and *Building America* (1996, coauthored with Nancy N. Kari).

Brown: *Why do you think "democracy" is a relevant question for higher education to take up?*

Boyte: The term democracy, like citizenship, is contested with different strands of meaning. None is "wrong" but what one emphasizes makes a huge difference in how much it engages citizen energies and interests. Democracy is not simply elections and the rule of law. Nor is it sufficiently expanded by a focus on civil society and the idea of the citizen as volunteer. I think the current emphasis of volunteerism "dumbs down" citizenship by highlighting personal traits like caring and individual acts of kindness and eclipsing questions of power, collective action, the cultures and functioning of institutions, and larger systemic problems.

I believe democracy is best understood as the "unfinished work of the people," a view deeply rooted in the American tradition (central to the Gettysburg Address, for instance, and the sense that informed the citizenship schools of the civil rights movement, where I worked as a young man). It is also relatively untheorized, though the National Commission on Civic Renewal did adopt this view in its 1998 report, *A Nation of Spectators.* In this view, the aim of democratic politics is people's self-conscious work of "building the commons," our common world, material and social culture, that all depend on, from local libraries and schools, community fairs, and collective norms and rituals, to reforming institutions and society as a whole, the aim of the civil

rights movement.

There are immense obstacles to democracy being taken seriously in this sense in higher education. This view goes against the dominant movements in higher education in recent decades. The trend has been toward career preparation, specialized knowledge based on the model of science, and what might be called expert system-maintenance. This has a "public service" aspect, but it is technocratic.

For higher education to come to express and promote democracy as the work of the people will mean challenging and transcending the view that academics are "outside," fixing people and problems, not part of a shared social reality. This view of the detached academic is woven into the fabric of our disciplines, our research approaches, our teaching, and our institutional cultures. Seeking to overcome it makes "democracy" a breathtakingly radical project, in the sense of a return to roots.

Democracy understood as the unfinished work of the people will entail a reintegration of academic identities and practices with local civic cultures and identification with other citizens. It will also mean the reinvigoration of "publics" themselves, citizens who act in more public-regarding ways, who think of themselves in less personalized, aggrieved, and narrowly righteous ways. Higher education's civic reconstruction will be key to the reconstruction of such publics.

Brown: *Do you take exception to the current motives for involvement of many citizens, for example the "evangelical right"?*

Boyte: Absolutely not. The heart of what I call the "craft" approach to public knowledge is bringing different cultures and histories — bringing distinctive identities — into the public world, especially through real work. People come into public life for all sorts of reasons — as Saul Alinsky put it, self-interest is the low road to civic virtue. In action on tasks of public importance with a mix of people, people's thinking is often "enlarged," to use Kant's term, one shouldn't look for "conversion." The problem today is that there are few places where people work on public tasks and interact with others outside their interest group. Citizen activism across the political spectrum currently reinforces narrowness, not breadth of vision, not "democracy as the people's work."

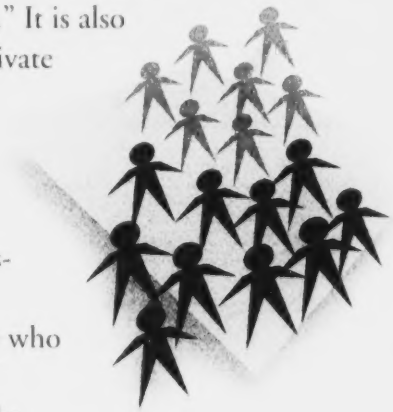
Brown: *Is there evidence that higher education wants to play the reconstructive role you envision?*

Boyte: For all its implausibility, there seems to be develop-

ing a resonance with the idea of democracy-as-work-of-the-people in higher education. I call this "public work," meaning work by a public, in public fashion, for public ends, all feeding the large end of building democracy. One could see the resonance in the changing discussions about "civic responsibility" and "civic engagement" in the associations like ACE, AAHE, AAC&U, and Campus Compact over the last couple of years. Leaders were open to the idea that civic engagement needed to be broadened from mainly off-hours voluntarism, or service learning, to an emphasis on the core work of faculty, staff, students, disciplines, and institutions as a whole. Democracy within the "work-centered" sense is central to the two "declarations" that were issued in 1999: *The Wingspread Declaration* and the Presidents' *July 4th Declaration*.

Brown: *Could you say more about what you call "public work"?*

Boyte: "Public work" helps to put professionals back into the mix of everyday experience, common life — what Jane Addams described as the "crowded throng." It is also about tasks of public significance that cultivate larger energies, skills, and vision. Identification with "the common lot" is the foundation of serious public life, and we need linguistic, theoretical, and practical ways to get at the problem of "distancing" that afflicts professionals. I like "public work" because it discomforts those who want to maintain distance. Jane Addams' approach to public knowledge is more aptly called "craftlike" than "scientific." Her approach was aimed at "freeing the power" of people and "connecting them to the whole," not abstracting laws and universals from which the concrete and particular were removed. The aim of her knowledge was wisdom, not certainty. Its spirit was practical, as well as ethical.



I like "public work" because it discomforts those who want to maintain distance.

Public work doesn't assume a singular kind of knowledge. It recognizes many sorts of experiences and ways of knowing as important in creating our common world. Higher education leaders once had a much better sense of this, at least in the public and land grant schools. For instance, Liberty Bailey, the great philosopher of cooperative extension, was the world's preeminent horticulturalist. But he was, equally, an eloquent advocate of multiple ways of knowing in public life. Forms of civic work

influenced many professional traditions through much of the twentieth century. Teachers and professors, journalists, librarians, clergy, youth workers, public health professionals, union organizers, settlement workers, civil service employees and others understood themselves as citizens first — "public workers" in common projects with other citizens. These patterns of work sustained a crucial understanding of the citizen as cocreator of a common world.

Brown: *Why is public work not well understood among those in higher education?*

Boyte: The conditions of intellectual labor are highly individualized, and also freighted with extreme hierarchies of status and power. To put it simply, intellectuals' work tends to be very unpublic. It's hard to theorize in social and political terms what one has not experienced much. I also think the democratic dimensions of work have been neglected because change-oriented intellectuals have a strong utopian bent. Their focus is largely on what community organizers call the "world as it should be." Professionals also have a penchant for the pure and clean. By way of contrast, most work is messy, hard, and ambiguous. An exception to the conceptual neglect of work is found in Catholic social thought, especially the writings of John Paul II. John Paul writes that work is "a good thing not only because it is useful ... but because it expresses and increases the worker's dignity. Through work we not only transform the world, we are transformed ourselves, becoming more a human being." The Center for Democracy and Citizenship and our network of colleagues have developed the concept of public work, beginning with the concept of "work" itself as a basic human activity. Then we explore its public dimensions, historical roots, and possibilities.

Most service experiences simply don't offer opportunities to address the deeper roots of public problems.

Brown: *How would you respond to someone in higher education who is, nonetheless, indifferent to an academy-"public work" linkage, saying in so many words, "so what"?*

Boyte: There are three reasons for paying attention. The first is that there is a tremendous pent-up desire for such activity. We can see it among students all the time — the desire for educational experiences tied to action that makes a difference on all the problems that they've heard about all their lives, but which, without ways for them to act, seem overwhelming. Most service experiences simply don't offer opportunities to address the deeper roots of public problems. Faculty, too, have enormous pent-up public

energy. This was a striking finding in the interviews I did with senior faculty across the University of Minnesota. "There is a palpable hunger for more public experiences," said one faculty leader. This public hunger furnishes a powerful potential motivational wellspring to resist the growing corporatization of higher education.

The second reason is that this public desire also feeds into the institutional self-interests of simply keeping higher education alive. David Mathews put well this point. He observed that if higher education is mainly about career preparation and specialized knowledge, there are more and more vendors that offer an alternative. The for-profit University of Phoenix is the dramatic example. But there are many others; increasingly, for instance, corporations are developing their own in-house education programs. Distance learning can be seen as a trend toward far more efficient and profitable career preparation than anything resembling the current landscape of higher education. So, on one level, the emergence of a more robust concern with democracy recently reflects the effort to find a deeper rationale for institutions of higher education as actual places, living communities where people interact with each other in complex, multidimensional ways over time. There are many practical aspects of this — parents and students wanting to get their money's worth; local communities asking for constructive partnerships with colleges and universities; and, in the case of public institutions, legislators wanting to see the public contribution, and so forth.

Brown: *What is the third reason for paying attention to public work?*

Boyte: The third is bound up in how higher education responds to the epistemological and practical fault lines that have opened up in the "scientific worldview." I'm not antiscience, but I believe that science is only one of many valuable forms of knowledge in public life. Fortun and Bernstein point out in their excellent book on science, *Muddling Through*, that the conventional model imagines science to be a search for purified, abstracted knowledge. But this just doesn't fit the way real science is developed. Science is full of trial and error, uncertainty, and at its best, attentive to many voices.

The notion of the outside expert as the ultimate problem solver and arbiter of public affairs leads to a multitude of practical problems. James Scott's *Seeing Like a State* shows the consequences

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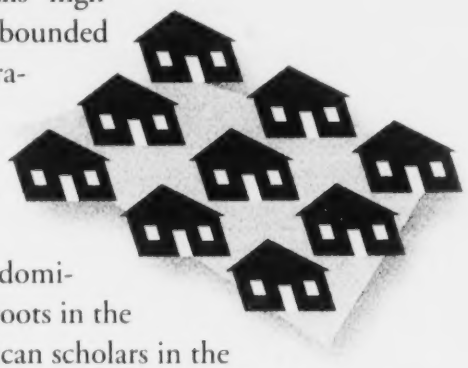
of socialist and state-led agricultural policies in the twentieth century. Scott demonstrates how what he calls "high modernist" ideology, infused with an unbounded faith in science and wedded to administrative tools, has wreaked human havoc. In his arresting image, governments have sought to reconstruct human communities like they reconstructed old growth forests. In higher education, the dominance of the ideal of outside expert has roots in the impact of German universities on American scholars in the late nineteenth century, but it became overwhelming after World War II. The fight against communism provided the rationale. Today, when our challenge is the civic crisis in American life, what once might be justified is now itself the problem.



Yet there is also a growing recognition that in most areas, especially about complex problems, the technocratic-expert approach simply doesn't work. Social scientists can't "fix" social problems like doctors cured tuberculosis (a revolution is brewing even in medicine, where there is a new emphasis on the patient and the community's "coproduction" of health). Many perspectives need to be at the table even to define what the problem is. For longer range, connected work on public tasks, we need wisdom, not simply knowledge. A renewed focus on public judgment, or wisdom, is a great contribution of the deliberative project undertaken by the Kettering Foundation.

We need a very different and far more civic craft model of intellectual and professional practice if we are to see any widespread democratic renewal. The point is not to shape or normalize clients, but rather to provide tools and occasions for people and institutions to discover their distinctive spirit, traditions, and public work — I would say, "to grow more public selves" through real work. How do we put our institutions and ourselves back in the public? Higher education, as it claims its larger role, will be central to the reconstitution of democratic theory and practice.

Brown: *How then do colleges and universities attend to public work?*

Boyte: Think of sustained partnerships between campuses and communities that are multidimensional, complex, that involve building public relationships through a variety of forms of work together. This kind of partnership enlists students' energies and

educational interests, while it also builds ties with communities and families and institutions. It creates patterns of reciprocal interest. We see this at work at the Jane Addams School — our center's partnership with other colleges, Neighborhood House settlement, and Hmong and Latino immigrants on the West Side of St. Paul. There, high school students and their parents are involved in a variety of community action and learning projects with college students and faculty.

Created in the fall of 1996, Jane Addams School has aimed at "renewing the spirit of Hull House," especially the spirit of collaborative learning, political action and organizing, immigrant contributions, and a vision of democracy itself that was so characteristic of Hull House in the early decades of the twentieth century. Jane Addams has been a remarkably vital "commons," expressing the culture and identity of the West Side neighborhood (through many different forms, including public art, gardens, and festivals). It is a site for twice a week "learning circles" where people engage in political discussions, cultural exchange, study for citizenship tests, and other topics.

For college students and faculty involved, it has created a deep connection to the civic life of the Twin Cities and the West Side. Jane Addams has begun to be a noteworthy pathway for minority student recruitment. It has also generated many significant public projects, from working with Hmong veteran recognition (the CIA promised recognition 30 years ago if Hmong aided in the "Secret War in Laos," the promise is still unfulfilled) to school reform. This year parents and students are working on a major campaign with teachers in an area school, Humboldt, where reading levels have placed the school on "probation" in the St. Paul district. The goals are partly to get the school off of probation, and other issues have emerged, such as student attendance, communication between the school and families, and transportation policy. It is skillful organizing, aimed at energizing the learning culture at the school and creating a working partnership with the new school superintendent, that creates a deeper sense of citizenship, connection to schools, and public power.

Scholarship and teaching are best conceived as crafts....

This is an example of what I would call public work as "public craft," full of implications for civic renewal, student learning, institutional cultural change, and the creation of both general theory and applied theory. Scholarship and teaching in this sort of

setting are best conceived as crafts, when local knowledge, experiential knowledge, articulation of local "products" and identities — all are part of the mix. It is different than "advocacy" forms of citizen activism, which simply mobilize constituencies to demand resources. It depends on a process of leadership development, relationship-building, and local knowledge — stuff that simply cannot be well described or understood by "centralized" theory making (nor well understood by teaching simply "about" it).

Public work can stimulate new forms of public scholarship, new theories, new research agendas that come from such problems and situations. We also see this a lot in Public Achievement(PA), our youth initiative, which challenges conventional theories of youth development that define "age appropriate" capabilities and behaviors. One of the things I most enjoy is to see the site visitor say, "young people can't be doing that kind of project, all the research says they are too young."

Brown: *It is interesting to hear how you put into practice what you would have others in higher education also do. If you would, describe more about Public Achievement.*

Boyte: Our partnerships are "civic laboratories" for our collective thinking about democratic action as well as ways to put theory into practice. PA is our signature laboratory. It is now in seven cities, and beginning in Northern Ireland. We figure about 2,000 kids and more than 200 coaches are active this year [1999] in 28 sites. One vital aspect of PA is the constant training, evaluation, and discussion of what is working, and what is the meaning of the work in terms of political concepts like citizenship, power, politics, public work, and how "public life is different from private life." Training and learning take place every week in teams with coaches. I bring 15 graduate students from the Humphrey Institute each week to an inner-city school in Minneapolis, where they work with fifth and sixth graders who design and implement public work projects over the year. Projects range widely and address tough issues, from teen pregnancy and gang violence to improving the playground. One group of sixth grade students negotiated with the Mall of America to raise money from shoppers to buy acres of the rain forest for a nature conservancy.

We also have areawide events, like a recent conference when people came from across Minnesota for a combination of training, inspiration, sharing stories, building relationships, and planning for working together among schools. The conference took place at

Humboldt, a school with many new immigrants on the West Side of St. Paul, where Junior ROTC is the sponsor. Cadets, mostly immigrants, proud and confident in their uniforms, showed people around. The meeting had enormous diversity — African-Americans, Hmong, Latino, European-Americans; kids from very poor backgrounds, and suburban kids; differences in geography, from inner city to small towns; different ages, from kids as young as seven through high school, and many college age students, and then older adults of various political persuasions — parents, teachers, principals, community leaders, faculty members. And there was Angela Mathews, an amazing 22-year-old from Northern Ireland, who is chairing their PA committee. Angela gave an inspired speech about how they see Public Achievement involving youth in the building of a peaceful "new democracy" in Northern Ireland.

I keep thinking about the remarkable talents of these young people. They are deeply committed to the cause of "rebuilding democracy," immensely hardworking, great at surfacing conflicts and dealing with problems, passionate about learning from mistakes — the "craft of public work" as we put it. The meeting illustrated how much young people want space to become "more public" to take themselves more seriously and to be taken seriously on a larger stage. During her speech, Angela asked, "How many in the room like politics?" Most raised their hands. It was striking just after a national report about the disinterest of young Americans in politics. As Angela pointed out, "It's because we are all doing politics. It's not simply something politicians do."

Brown: *Thank you, Harry.*

NIF AT A&M

By D. Conor Seyle

Texas A&M University has more than 42,000 undergraduate students, and a correspondingly huge number of faculty, staff, and administrators. In proper Texas fashion, we do everything large. Every size of school has its own type of benefits and problems, and A&M is no different. Many normal problems that most schools face are exacerbated by our size.

Many of the problems that universities are dealing with today are miniature mirrors of the same problems that society as a whole is facing. One of these is student apathy and a feeling of disconnection from the rule-making structure of the university.

Of course, this is not just a student problem. Faculty, staff, administration, and students may sometimes feel alienated from the other areas of the university. At A&M, it is sometimes felt by the students that the administration listens to the wishes of the alumni over those of the current students in almost every situation. In the administration, they face the problem of polling a 42,000-individual body, let alone finding a consensus. With 42,000 people, we have at least two of everything, and that includes opinions.

There is, however, at A&M, a real feeling of community among everyone who is associated with the school, and because of this, we want to speak up and be heard. A&M has been using this desire to drive several experiments based on bringing together the different aspects of the school. These have included President Ray Bowen hosting barbecues at his house, Vice President Malon Southerland having lunch with any students who ask, and more open exchange of information between the administration and the student and faculty senate. Another experiment that we have been working with at A&M is the National Issues Forums (NIF) style of deliberation. We have high hopes that this will allow us to both bring the campus together as a whole, and also focus A&M's attention on world events.

The first forum held at A&M was on the future of higher education, and part of the joint NIF and National Collegiate

Honors Council report on the future of higher education in America. From that forum, several students were asked if they would like to work more with similar forums. Three years ago, in 1997, we sent three undergraduate students and one graduate student advisor to a Public Policy Institute in Alabama. Since then, we have been sending four or five students yearly to a PPI, and have built up a small but effective corps of moderators at A&M. This May will be the first year that we will begin to lose them through attrition, and we are waiting to decide if we will send more students than needed to replace those who graduate, or if we will let the size of the moderator pool stabilize.

Deliberations at A&M have ranged from small forums targeted at single dorms and based around issues related to that dorm (one of the first forums held was for the honors dorm, on the issue of computer privacy) to larger campuswide and communitywide deliberations dealing with overarching social issues such as racism and the effects of the Hopwood decision (which banned race-based scholarships in Texas). One particularly interesting forum was held for the Biomedical Students Association and the Pre-Doctoral Student Association on the topic of medical ethics and euthanasia.

Participants at the forums have been enthusiastic in joining the deliberation. For many of these students, this is the first time that they are being asked to discuss their opinions and beliefs. A&M has a large engineering college, and many people who take classes primarily in that college tend to miss out on the open discussion that has been an integral part of higher education since Socrates. Forums are usually lively, especially when it is on a topic in which the participants already have some interest. The forum on Internet privacy, for example, was one in which the moderator had to do very little other than ask the first question.

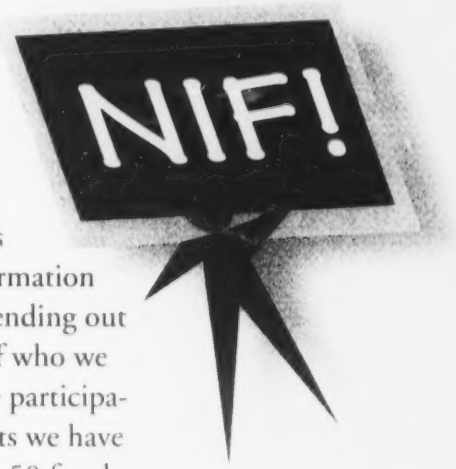
Because NIF is a new organization on campus, we have been questioning the participants on whether they think the forum was a good experience, and whether deliberation is a valid thing to push for or not. The answers have been overwhelmingly in the affirmative. In fact, we usually net one or two new converts asking to work with the NIF committee after each forum.

The student response has been positive, and so has the response of the administration. Participants in the forums at A&M have been for the most part students, but interested faculty and staff attend as well. One of the greatest endorsements of the

forums came from a staff member talking not about the forum itself, but the students. He said that he was surprised by the insight of the students, and the clarity with which they expressed themselves. Likewise, several students have mentioned the benefits of having an older person with a different point of view at the forum. Using these statements as a benchmark, NIF seems to be working to bring together diverse groups on campus.

This is not to give the impression that NIF at A&M has been running perfectly. We are facing many of the same problems that any campus organization faces. The biggest, of course, is just getting participants into the seats.

While almost everyone who attends a forum ends up getting drawn into the discussion, or at least tells us later that they enjoyed the experience and came away with useful information, it is first necessary to get them to attend. We are a large school, and on any given day there are several events competing for participants, advertising space, and attention in general. NIF is still a new organization, and not yet one that has a dedicated body of followers. Without actively pushing the forums, attendance is disappointing. When we use more aggressive methods of promotion, such as writing the information on the chalkboards of classrooms, or sending out personal invitations to faculty and staff who we think would appreciate it, we get more participation. The largest number of participants we have had at any one forum has been around 50 for the discussion on racism in America. The limited attendance does have the side benefit of allowing more real deliberation, since 50 people is about the maximum for discussion before it becomes completely unwieldy.



...the deliberation gave them a greater understanding of all sides of the issue....

Another issue that has been raised in some forums is the question of follow-up. In many forums, this is not an issue. Euthanasia, for example, is an issue that we hope none of the participants in our forum will have to deal with for a long time, and one which they will certainly not have to deal with as doctors for at least a few years. We hope that the deliberation gave them a greater understanding of all sides of the issue, and more completely informed their beliefs. The benefits from the forum are long

term and subtle. In some issues, however, participants want some additional place to go. The deliberation sparks a burst of enthusiasm and interest in the issue, which may dissipate if it is not focused immediately. We have used this enthusiasm to recruit members of our committee, but in dealing with the issues discussed, we have had less luck. In keeping with the deliberative nature of NIF, we have never wanted to provide biased information of the type that political activist groups usually give. Instead, we have been experimenting with the idea of compiling a list of resources for further information and activism that we can give to participants who ask how they can work to directly make a difference in the issue just discussed.

This is related to what is probably the most serious problem with deliberation at A&M. As it stands right now, deliberation is episodic. That is, participants come to a forum as they would to any other event. They sit down, receive information, deliberate, mark their ballots, and leave. Although most participants really enjoy the time they spend at a deliberation, and get drawn into the discussion and into the topic, when they leave the room they revert to their past habits of communication and discussion.

Deliberation is a powerful tool, and it can be a truly transformative one. It is, at heart, a fundamentally different way of communicating than we are used to. It is based on active listening, respect for all participants, and most of all, an unbiased appraisal of all aspects of the issue, even those not represented by the participants. It is also, however, subtle. Participants in the deliberation respond to it as something different and unique, but tend to associate the new take on communication with the discussion, the issue booklet, and the moderator rather than as just a different way of looking at interaction.

If deliberation is going to have the unitive, communicative effect that we want it to, it cannot be something that is done for two hours once every two weeks. It has to be interwoven in the way that participants look at the world. It has to become the standard so that even without a moderator and three options, people ask themselves what sides of the issue aren't being represented, and respond calmly and intelligently to other people's statements. It has to become a part of the fabric of everyday interaction.

We see two ways of helping to accomplish this, both of which we have experimented with at A&M. The first way is simply to point out that this is something new and different, and to

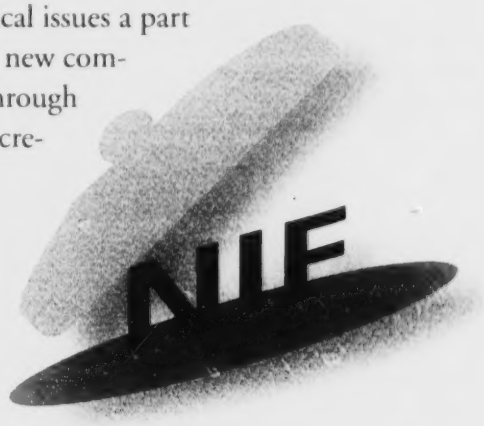
...a new way *of doing things rather than a new* thing *to do....*

explain to people the idea of deliberation. We explain the basics at every forum we hold, and we continue to send people to Public Policy Institutes (PPIs) to give them a direct experience. Moderators report that the skills learned there are applicable to every aspect of life. Another way, and one which we are very excited about, is to work NIF and the NIF method of deliberation into other aspects of the school. By making it a new *way* of doing things rather than a new *thing* to do, we focus a little more attention on the process itself.

We have two major triumphs in this approach. Working with the Department of Residence Life and the Residence Hall Association, we have included an NIF forum into the training program for Resident Advisors (RAs). Alcohol awareness is an important issue at A&M, and one that the RAs are very thoroughly trained in. In the past, this has been more of a lecture style, as they are told the gravity of alcohol abuse and their responsibility as a representative of the school to address it with the seriousness it deserves. This past year was the first in which this approach was supplemented with an NIF forum using the NIF alcohol issue booklet. The deliberation was lively, and the RAs responded very positively to being given the chance to talk about what they believed about the issue, rather than what they were expected to do when noticing an alcohol violation. Although this method does run the risk of having avidly pro-alcohol people guide the discussion in a direction that the Department of Residential Life is very strongly opposed to, effective facilitation can ensure that all sides are addressed. The forums were a large success, as the RAs on both sides of the issue got to hear ideas about alcohol and alcoholism that they might not have considered. Several reported that it gave them a more thorough understanding of a point of view they never really understood before. This is important because it uses deliberation to supplement something that was already being discussed. The deliberation was effective and something qualitatively different than the other approaches to the issue being offered the participants. In this setting, deliberation shines. It is still an episodic rather than a habitual use of deliberation, but because it is presented as a part of a larger program, rather than as a completely separate event, the power of the conversation shows through. In fact, several of the RAs who participated are very vociferous proponents of NIF and the NIF group on campus after their experience.

The other great triumph of NIF deliberation at A&M comes

through our Vision 20/20 plan. The Vision 20/20 plan is a strategic plan to make A&M an internationally highly competitive school by the year 2020. A part of that plan is to increase the intellectual atmosphere at Texas A&M, and make discussion of key political and philosophical issues a part of life at the university. This year, a new committee, MSC Conversations, run through the Memorial Student Center, was created to address that goal. MSC Conversations sponsors small-group dinner discussion groups composed of professors and students. The dinners are held at professors' houses, and the groups discuss several issues facing the world. One of the executives responsible for creating the idea and the current chair and vice chair of the committee are all NIF moderators, and the values of NIF and the deliberative skills learned there enrich the committee. The basics of deliberation are taught to all of the executives in the committee, at least one of whom attends each dinner discussion. Although they are not NIF moderators in the sense that they have not attended a PPI, and the dinner discussions do not use the three-option format, execs play the same role as a moderator. They make sure that the discussion remains friendly, and that all sides of the issue have been addressed. The deliberation is not as thorough as that in a true NIF forum, but the values of deliberation and consideration are very much a part of the exchange.



This is the first semester for this new committee, and we are unable to tell where it will go, but we have very high hopes. It is our fervent wish that by the deadline for the Vision 20/20 plan, this new committee will no longer be a committee. Instead, it will be just something that students and professors do at A&M, small gatherings to discuss issues that we all have a connection to. Response to the idea and to the discussion, so far, has been enthusiastic.

NIF deliberation at A&M has a short history. In the four years it has been on campus, though, it has caused ripples. The

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eventual goal of NIF at A&M — a truly unified campus that listens to its members, considers possible courses of action carefully before choosing, and acts with the support of the faculty, students, staff, and administration — is not a pipe dream. The seeds are being sown with every individual who takes the time to listen to an opposing viewpoint, or to think about why someone feels the way that they do. It is admittedly a long-term goal, but Texas A&M University has been here for 124 years. It will probably be here long enough to see that goal realized.

TALKING ABOUT MY GENERATION:

The Public Work of Today's Young Scholars

By Maria M. Farland

For the generation of young academics in the humanities currently coming up through the ranks, the professional landscape is a bleak one. Of those who complete their degrees at elite institutions such as Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Berkeley, fewer than 50 percent will find employment in full-time tenure-track positions — the professional goal toward which their training has conventionally been geared. These recent Ph.D.'s will begin their job search after a grueling apprenticeship whose average length exceeds that of law and medical school combined, most devoting more than seven years of their lives to training for an academic career in the humanities that has all but disappeared. Equally alarming for young academic humanities professionals is the sharp decline of interest in humanities study among undergraduate students; in a recent survey, only 9 percent of incoming students now indicate an interest in humanities study.

I want to suggest, counterintuitively perhaps, that this "lost" generation of young humanities scholars is at the vanguard of an exciting professional revolution — indeed, I want to suggest that many of these young scholars have already begun a much-needed revitalization of humanities scholarship. In the wake of the recent crisis, as I will discuss below, a shrinking percentage of young academic professionals who seek employment each year are finding tenure-track positions. The less fortunate among them are finding themselves consigned to part-time employment. Many of the more resourceful young humanists — I would even venture to say the most talented — are leaving academia to seek alternative forms of employment. These enterprising young scholars are at the forefront of a quiet professional revolution that is bringing humanistic professionals into a wide variety of roles outside the walls of academia. As these young humanistic professionals bring their knowledge into a variety of professional and public arenas, they have the potential to make the humanities truly "public" by

virtue of their position outside the ivory tower. The recent crisis in the humanities also signals a significant opportunity for a debate concerning the vitally important issue of the university's relation to the public sphere.

At the end of the twentieth century, young humanists find themselves entering a professional environment that diverges sharply from the conventional image of an ivory-towered professorship. As tenured humanities faculty have been slowly replaced by part-time faculty positions, the very model of career that has defined the work of academic humanities professionals for almost a century is being phased out, made inaccessible to those at all but very few individuals at elite institutions. Even as the economy flourishes outside the university's walls, inside America's academic institutions, humanities departments have experienced a downsizing analogous to that seen in the corporate world. As a consequence, a shocking proportion of undergraduate and even graduate teaching is currently undertaken by adjunct faculty, teaching assistants, and other part-time academic workers. At the City University of New York, temporary workers are responsible for more than half of all teaching systemwide. In the state of California, renown for its public university system, the situation is virtually identical; the former chancellor of California State University estimates that more than 50 percent of all class hours in California higher education — both public and private — are taught by academic workers on short-term contracts rather than full-time faculty appointments. Perhaps more strangely, this situation has come to pass only a decade after experts on higher education had predicted a massive shortage of full-time faculty members.

While professional associations such as the Modern Language Association and the American Political Science Association have witnessed heated exchanges regarding the academic employment crisis, the membership of these organizations has been sharply divided. Some voices within these organizations have argued that the best response to the crisis in employment would be to cut back graduate education: If people aren't willing to pay them for the product they produce, academic professionals should produce less of it. Some institutions, like Yale University, have responded by radically scaling back graduate programs. Others have stressed that humanities graduate education should not be narrowly directed toward the training and vetting of professors. One proponent of this view, political science professor Nathan Tarcov of the

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University of Chicago, argues that graduate education has never been "solely in the business of reproducing university professors," but rather has "always also served to educate civil servants, policy intellectuals, journalists, novelists." Moreover, "it is good for graduate education not to be directed solely toward the reproduction of university professors," Tarcov observes, "not only because it helps pay tuition in an era of shrinking demand for university professors, but also because it helps preserve something of the spirit of liberal education on the graduate level." In Tarcov's view, graduate education should address itself to students who intend to pursue a wide variety of careers; in his words, "the more the merrier." This position has found support in diverse quarters, with prominent academic figures like Modern Language Association President Elaine Showalter, and former University of Michigan Dean Robert Weisbuch urging humanities professionals to consider alternative venues for their expertise, and taking concrete steps to foster career alternatives for humanities Ph.D.'s through fellowships and partnerships with corporate and nonprofit employers.

...a significant body of expertise and education has been liberated from the ivory tower of the university,...

Yet even as battles wage concerning the current crisis, the humanities are seeing a steady revitalization that has as yet gone unrecognized. This renewal of humanities scholarship is coming from a very unlikely source: the large body of humanities Ph.D.'s who will never find permanent teaching positions in America's colleges and universities. In the wake of a decade-long employment crisis that has left tens of thousands of the nation's most academically talented individuals unemployed, a significant body of expertise and education has been liberated from the ivory tower of the university, sent out into the wider world of journalism, education, the nonprofit sector, and even business. As off-campus humanistic professionals pursue a variety of career paths outside the walls of academia, these young humanistic professionals are placing their impressive intelligence and creativity at the disposal of the larger public. They have the opportunity to make the humanities truly "public" as they embark on a variety of endeavors — as journalists, as activists, as community organizers, to name only a few activities at which they have already excelled — outside the narrow walls of the university.

One of the few writers to recognize the new trend, Jack Miles of the J. Paul Getty Trust, has argued that "young academics displaced into the general labor market" have the potential to coa-

lesce into "a new form of intellectual," creating "an organized liberal arts alternative to academe." Humanities professionals outside the ivory tower might organize themselves for new kinds of educational and nonprofit ventures, Miles envisions. If we imagine these "displaced academics" as "internal refugees," they have transformative possibilities. As "academics in nonacademic venues," Miles opines, they might "produce a new, more avocational style of liberal arts research and publication." Such knowledge workers could eventually succeed the model of the salaried professor as the carriers of the humanistic tradition in the United States, though they will no longer be tied to institutions of higher education. As the North American economy turns toward management of knowledge and information, they will surely be invaluable, if only our society can find a way to make the best possible use of them.

Among members of my own generation, I already see evidence that recent humanities Ph.D.'s are beginning to transform what it means to be a professional in the humanities. Some, like Thomas Frank, the editor of the brilliant and popular publication, *The Baffler,* have undertaken projects in journalism and publishing. In addition to his work as an editor, Frank has produced important work on business culture that has touched a chord with academic and nonacademic audiences, writing in a compelling, readable style that has made his pathfinding study of advertising history, *The Conquest of Cool,* a best-selling nonfiction title. Others, like Berkeley Ph.D. Annalee Newitz, a founding editor of the journal *Bad Company,* have found employment and satisfaction writing for a popular audience. Newitz has published on topics as varied as information technology and horror movies in such venues as *Salon* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* and has a book on American media forthcoming from Duke University Press. Among my own circle of graduate school colleagues, I can name a number of successful and innovative Ph.D. "expatriates." Political theorist Alan Keenan, who spent almost a decade lecturing in political philosophy at Harvard and Berkeley Universities, has recently published an important book on democratic theory, *The Democratic Question,* with Stanford University Press. Keenan has also made creative use of these part-time faculty positions to diversify and expand his interests beyond the boundaries of narrow academic professionalism. After an intensive study of ethnic conflict and mediation studies, he is headed

off to undertake conflict-mediation in the troubled region of Sri Lanka, where he plans to put his political theory training to use in "real-life" situations where the political stakes are as high as they come.

It is tempting, but I think ultimately inaccurate, to call these young humanists "public intellectuals" in the tradition of such figures as Lionel Trilling and Henry Steele Commager (or, more recently, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Edward Said). Such intellectuals have tended to live and work in New York City, and have also tended to write for magazines such as *Harper's, The New Republic,* and *The New York Review of Books.* Programs like Florida Atlantic University's "Public Intellectuals" Ph.D. have attempted to capture some of the glamour and celebrity that seems to accrue to "public intellectuals" by devising a graduate program that it hopes will produce them. While it is often claimed that the academic culture of specialization militates against such "public" intellectuals, it is actually the case that the culture of celebrity, ever-present in academic profession, has always tended to celebrate and revere them. These celebrity intellectuals have also become increasingly important to the marketing strategies of academic institutions, as University of Missouri Professor Jeffrey Williams aptly observes: "the academic model of a career has been refashioned in terms of celebrityhood. Public intellectuals . . . become marquee figures or poster people for their particular universities. Public intellectuals become representative celebrities so that people will come to this or that university, spending many thousands of dollars per year so that they can have an opportunity to study with this or that celebrity academic." Though vitally important to the marketing and promotional efforts that are increasingly important in today's universities, many public intellectuals do not always engage in the sort of "public work" in their communities that Williams sees as crucial to a truly "public" intellectual.

...the terms "intellectual" and "public intellectual" cannot capture the diverse kinds of endeavors that motivate today's younger generation of humanistic scholars and writers.

For these reasons, the terms "intellectual" and "public intellectual" cannot capture the diverse kinds of endeavors that motivate today's younger generation of humanistic scholars and writers. Indeed, the term public intellectual conjures up figures

who are essentially public academics — conventional academics who, for reasons of geography, or political passions, retain their academic appointments but seek to broaden the audience or constituency for their work. Usually, of course, such freedom is open only to tenured faculty at elite institutions. Freed from the constraints of more onerous teaching duties, as well as the constraints of the tenure track, these faculty are free to write for a wide audience. In recent years, the genre of writing they have favored is the academic memoir: the memoir of "dog love" written by Marjorie Garber, a professor at Harvard; or the autobiography of her breast cancer written by Duke University's Eve Sedgwick; or the retrospective of her teaching career by Jane Tompkins. For a generation who came of age with the slogan "the personal is political," political life seems to consist in personal memoirs, and professional life frequently veers in the direction of introspective autobiography and memoir.

The scholars of my generation who have chosen to leave academic professionalism as it is narrowly defined within the university's walls differ significantly from their counterparts, the public intellectuals. Many of these young scholars address the public, and public problems, in a language and style that differ significantly from the highly specialized language of the academic discipline in which they were trained. Many are rooted in a particular community, especially urban communities: Tom Frank's *Baffler* is located in Chicago, and Frank has resisted invitations to move the fledgling publication to Manhattan. Many have forged links with the adults and citizens of their community, rather than to the youth of a particular campus community. Annalee Newitz finds much of her inspiration in the local hi-tech culture of Silicon Valley — her decision to leave academia is motivated by a sense of loyalty to her community, and this loyalty shapes her written work and the concerns she brings to it. Though some, like Berkeley Ph.D. Christine Boufis, enter into public work in part out of financial necessity — after failing to land a tenure-track job, Boufis landed a job in teaching English in a prison — but finds the work more rewarding than that of more conventional academic settings. Many like Tom Frank are literary stylists who write in a way that is superior to their academic counterparts. Most importantly, perhaps, the work of these young scholars seeks to genuinely enhance the public conversation on issues as vital to our times as business culture, information technology, and the popular media.

Increasingly, it is no longer the case that the academic community, narrowly defined, has authority in public issues.

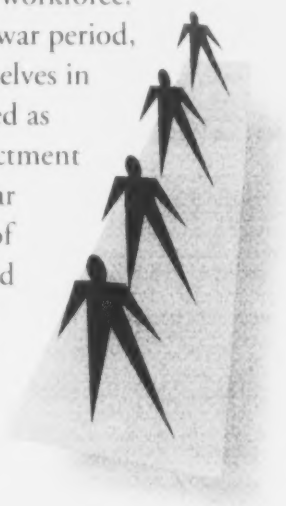
The coming of age of my generation has witnessed the emergence of a population of humanists who see the public conversation as the primary context in which they write, conduct research, and sometimes teach. Increasingly, it is no longer the case that the academic community, narrowly defined, has authority in public issues. Indeed, the academic humanities, having lost authority and audience in their home institutions in a very real way, no longer have the authority they once did in the public sphere — certainly the 9 percent approval rating that is indicated by prospective students suggests that they are no longer respected by tomorrow's citizens. As a consequence, it seems very likely that newly minted public scholars, many of whom address their work and their concerns to a broad public conversation, will take an important place alongside academic humanists as the carriers of a humanistic tradition that has always sought to, in Gerald Graff's words, "teach the conflicts" that shape public life in the United States.

Conversely, many humanities professionals who opt to diverge from the normative and narrow path of an academic professional career rigidly defined will find that their skills are very much in demand. In today's economy, as knowledge workers increasingly drive economic growth and expansion, there will be unprecedented need not only for those who can write and think critically, but also for those with skills to manage and deploy knowledge — precisely the skills in which today's humanities graduate and undergraduate students are trained. Within the expanding domain of the World Wide Web, there will be unforeseen opportunities for profit and nonprofit ventures that will both expand and replace traditional colleges and universities. These transformations mean a multiplication and expansion of the venues in which humanistic knowledge is disseminated and discussed, bringing additional creative opportunities and employment for humanistic professionals outside the campus walls.

To date, however, academic professionals have responded defensively or with hostility to these changes by imagining that they signal the end of the university. Management guru Peter Drucker, for example, predicts that the on-line revolution will bring the end of the university as we have known it — the university as such will be put out of business by shifts in the knowledge economy that place knowledge, both humanistic and scientific, in the wider public domain. Many fear the incursion of "distance

learning" on the traditional turf of academic institutions, and elite liberal arts institutions such as Williams College are currently debating the feasibility and desirability of entering the distance learning fray. Rather than seeing information technology as an opportunity for greater intellectual engagement and work in the public sphere, humanities intellectuals have tended to see such publicity as a debasement or vulgarization of the traditional role of the university.

Why are intellectuals so reluctant to consider the prospect of "going public"? As scholar Andrew Hoberek argues in his fascinating study of white-collar work, academic professionals have tended to define their work in opposition to their nearest counterpart, white-collar workers. This opposition between academic professionals and professionals broadly speaking intensified in the 1950s, when white-collar workers first surpassed blue-collar workers to become the largest segment of the U.S. workforce. With the rise of white-collar work in the postwar period, American intellectuals sought to define themselves in opposition to white-collar workers they decried as conformist, "organization men." In their indictment of the monotony and alienation of white-collar work, intellectuals sought to define the kind of knowledge they have as antithetical to the kind of knowledge that drives the marketplace. If the organization man was only a "cog" in the "beltline of the bureaucratic machinery," as C. Wright Mills put it, elite intellectuals saw themselves as distinctive from the white-collar masses for the autonomy of their intellectual work, enjoying a kind of freedom and creativity in defining their professional lives that differed markedly from the dystopian 1950s' emblem of the professional-middle class, the man in the gray flannel suit. In Hoberek's view, much American writing of the second half of the twentieth century should be seen as "the work of intellectuals bent on dramatizing their freedom from the conformist world of the white-collar middle-class 'organization man.'" As Hoberek sees it, U.S. academic professionals might more productively see their own original "knowledge work" as "prototypical of, rather than marginal to," other forms of knowledge work within an economy that is increasingly oriented around information and knowledge.



As Hoberek's work suggests, there is an important sense in

which humanities professionals are similar to the very professionals they have disparaged for almost a half-century. Like their counterparts in the professions of law, medicine, or social work, they sell their mental work to the highest bidder or, in the wake of the employment crisis, to no bidder at all. That academic professionals in the humanities have failed to see their own work in these terms is partly a function of a failure to imagine work outside the context of manual labor — a legacy of a lingering Marxist perspective that has continued to define and shape the ways in which Americans understand work both inside and outside academia. This failure has too often led to a romantic valorization of the professorial career as a form of career that is, paradoxically, anticareer.

But in the meantime, as Ph.D. programs at institutions such as the University of Texas at Austin develop programs such as the "Graduate Professional Development Program," which helps young Ph.D.'s sell their skills in professional fields such as business consultancy, the affinity between academic professionals and other professionals has become difficult to ignore. With humanities professionals headed into adjacent professional roles in unprecedented numbers, the relation between the university and the public sphere promises to be radically transformed, and reshaped, in ways that cannot be predicted. Like it or not, these young humanities scholars are "going public," and the unexpected turn their careers have taken may be the only hope for shoring up the legitimacy crisis in the humanities.

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THE COLLEGE AS CITIZEN:

One College Evolves through the Work of Public Deliberation

By Douglas Challenger

Over the last year or so, several faculty members at Franklin Pierce College have helped establish a new kind of civic organization called the New Hampshire Center for Civic Life. During that time, the college has begun to see many benefits from its support and sponsorship of this innovative organization. The benefits include: new and stronger relationships with organizations, communities, and grantmaking foundations; improvements in the campus climate for diversity; innovative curricular and pedagogical reform; and professionally transformative faculty development. All of this has contributed substantially to the college's growing reputation as a leader of innovative programs among small liberal arts colleges. In what follows, I will briefly describe how the New Hampshire Center for Civic Life has helped bring about these various improvements and suggest how this new initiative has enabled the college to more effectively meet its goals.

The New Hampshire Center for Civic Life: A New Kind of College/Community Partnership

The New Hampshire Center for Civic Life is made up of individuals and organizations that are working to bring citizens together in nonpartisan community forums on and off our campus to discuss some of the most pressing issues that face our campus, the state, and the nation. It is animated by the idea that democracy needs the deliberative wisdom and public action of responsible citizens if it is to work well. The New Hampshire Center for Civic Life is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to building the practices of deliberative democracy in our state and across the northern New England region. We are currently considering changing our name to the New England Center for Civic Life as a result of partnerships that we are developing with organizations and institutions in states other than New Hampshire. We convene forums and study circles on issues that matter to New Hampshire residents. Participants in these public discussions have the opportunity to consider multiple perspectives, to learn from each other,

to understand areas of disagreement, and to discover common areas of concern as they try to formulate public policy decisions together.

All our work is done in collaboration with partnering organizations that help us reach into many segments of our communities. Working with secondary schools and colleges, with media and civic organizations, along with many others, the goal is to engage citizens in a democratic process that enhances our ability to work together to address issues that are relevant to our daily lives.

We also train moderators and convenors for local community forums and teach issue-framing practices that help promote public deliberation. We are the home of 1 of 29 Public Policy Institutes on deliberative democracy held in cooperation with the National Issues Forums Institute. We sponsor a variety of workshops throughout the year. Through education, training, and participatory action research, the New Hampshire Center for Civic Life also helps institutions (higher education, the media, public schools, and government) expand their civic purposes and actions in ways that build a stronger, deliberative, more active public.

For example, one important linkage that Franklin Pierce College recently made through this initiative was with the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. Our two very different institutions have begun to collaborate on projects that aim to build community through public deliberation. The New Hampshire Center for Civic Life provides a way for us to work together on that goal in complementary and mutually beneficial ways.

These new organizational partnerships are developing around a whole range of efforts and will provide a basis for future fund raising that will improve the college's relationship and reputation with grantmaking foundations and corporations. Like other places across the country, villages and towns in northern New England want to find more constructive ways to address needs of children and youth, support families, strengthen public schools, decrease drug and alcohol abuse, fight crime, improve race and ethnic relations and respect for diversity of all kinds, manage land and water use, and create community-sustaining approaches to economic development. The New Hampshire Center for Civic Life has begun to help a number of communities address these and other kinds of issues through the practices of deliberative democracy. We will continue to do so even more as our resources grow and our work becomes better known.

Improving the Campus Climate for Diversity

While this work was taking shape last year with the primary goal of working off campus in communities across the state, a series of events at the college led us to discover ways public deliberation could help the campus and be of use in our own classrooms.

Our small and sleepy New England college was awakened to the need to be more attentive to diversity last school year when the campus experienced two violent student conflicts where racial slurs were hurled and people were physically hurt. The first incident occurred in April of 1998 and, less than nine months later, a second one took place in early December. In both cases, the incidents were thoroughly investigated and the college administration swiftly and appropriately disciplined the students involved.

But, after the second incident, a small group of minority students sought to heighten the awareness of college administrators about racial intolerance on our predominantly white campus, and in a meeting with school officials, discussed the need to improve the college's climate for diversity of all kinds. The college president and other senior staff moved quickly to address these concerns. During the ensuing weeks and over the holiday break, a new diversity committee at the college was formed, help was enlisted from an outside expert in race relations, and a plan was drawn up to hold a daylong, collegewide meeting when students and faculty returned to campus to begin the spring semester.

The event included a couple of short films and some opportunities for discussion, but the main focus of the campuswide meeting was a keynote address by a distinguished African-American sociologist of race relations on the challenges and strengths of racial diversity in higher education. The event, for which a day of classes were canceled and to which all members of the college were invited, was attended by nearly half of our 1,495 students and almost all of the staff and faculty. The daylong meeting was a clear statement to the college community that the administration intended to make a decisive and long-term commitment to improving the campus climate in relation to diversity. Beyond this rather dramatic response, however, the diversity committee and the college administration seemed unsure of what to do next.

It was soon after that daylong campuswide event that a friend and former teacher encouraged me to make some significant changes to how I was teaching my general education social science

course. As a result, I created space in the class for students to prepare a series of campus forums on race and ethnic relations last spring. These forums enabled approximately 120 students, along with a small number of faculty and staff, to deliberate and learn about racial diversity and intolerance.

This unique class project grew out of some experimenting I had been doing the semester before using the same National Issues Forums (NIF) model of deliberative dialogue that we were teaching to citizens off campus through the institutes and workshops of the New Hampshire Center for Civic Life.

My class of mostly white students worked for the better part of the semester to frame the issue, prepare discussion guidebooks, and learn how to moderate deliberative public forums. The culminating event of the class project occurred in late April when the class organized and moderated a series of four 2 and 1/2 hour open forums to address the question "How Can We Improve Race and Ethnic Relations on Campus?"

At the end of the semester, the students wrote about their experiences. Many had come to all the forums even though they were only required to attend the one that their group was moderating. They spoke about how they had been changed by engaging in and moderating this kind of dialogue with fellow students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

...one of the biggest obstacles to progress in race relations today is white people's denial of the continuing need for significant change in the way they relate to members of various minority groups....

During this course, it became clear that one of the biggest obstacles to progress in race relations today is white people's denial of the continuing need for significant change in the way they relate to members of various minority groups as well as in the biased nature of many institutional policies and procedures. Students' comments about this course reveal that this new way of teaching about these issues succeeded in breaking through that denial. It allowed this group of students and those who attended the forums to consider how different their various life experiences were as a result of their different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Listening to the stories told by people of color, white students slowly learned that their experiences were not the same as those of minority students. They began to discover that their mistaken notions about the commonalties of experience were a major obstacle to developing productive relations across racial lines.

The framework for the course raised this awareness like no other educational technique I have ever used. The sustained dialogue that these forums facilitated raised white students' awareness

about the inequalities with which their classmates of color cope every day. The minority students who participated in the forums also seemed to be encouraged by the exchanges these structured conversations allowed.

Closer connections across racial lines were forged. Interestingly enough, this was achieved not by trying to insist that we are all alike and share the same beliefs. Instead, we were able to move toward greater understanding and unity by allowing for the expression and presentation of different experiences and perspectives. Students were able to express, question, and challenge different interpretations of experiences and situations. This contributed enormously to the public knowledge of all the participants.

Students proposed a variety of new school policies. Throughout the process, they were challenged to rethink these proposals when students with backgrounds different from theirs gave arguments or told stories from their experience that revealed more to consider. This led participants, over time, to transform their proposals into policies designed to benefit the community as a whole, but that also addressed the specific needs of those who are uniquely situated at this predominantly white institution.

Several administrators and faculty at the college were encouraged by the contribution that this small effort made to the campus climate and wanted to continue and broaden these sorts of dialogues on an array of diversity issues on campus over the next couple of years. To do so, we developed a two-year plan entitled the Diversity and Community Project. The project is now being funded, in part, by a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The Diversity and Community Project addresses campus climate concerns about tolerance and respect for difference. One part of this project is called the Campus Conversations on Diversity Initiative. This initiative involves teams of students, faculty, staff, and off-campus community members framing the issues of race and ethnic relations, gender, and sexual orientation for wider campus forums. These teams will create discussion guidebooks to be used for a series of campus forums on each of

these issues. The issue guidebooks will be framed so that they can be used on other college and secondary school campuses as well as in towns and communities. A documentary film on the project is also being produced as part of the initiative.

We expect this effort to significantly improve campus climate and well-being around issues of diversity among faculty and staff as well as students. Tensions around diversity issues are one of the major obstacles to the learning and working environments of many college and university campuses across the nation. Our initial experience of creating opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to engage in sustained deliberative dialogue on these issues suggests that great improvements can be made to overcoming these difficulties. The obstacles to professional and educational opportunity that biased policies and patterns of interaction produce are slowly being diminished on our campus as a result of our efforts related to this project.

Curricular and Pedagogical Reform

In addition to the Campus Conversations on Diversity Initiative, the Diversity and Community Project also intends to accomplish some significant curricular and pedagogical reform within the framework of our existing general education program. The curricular and pedagogical reform part of the Diversity and Community Project is entitled the Freshman Seminar Deliberative Dialogue Initiative. It is designed to have first-year students engage in a form of experiential citizenship education that has as its focus learning the skills of participating in and moderating NIF-style deliberative public forums on diversity as well as other social issues. This initiative is being gradually integrated into the structure of a freshman course entitled "Individual and Community," which is the first of several common, general education courses in the college's core curriculum.

This past fall semester, five sections of the freshman seminar piloted the use of NIF-style deliberative conversations in the "Individual and Community" course. As a result, the freshman seminar is beginning to focus on teaching students an expanded view of politics that puts (students) citizens at the center of the democratic process as cocreators of the public world of policy and action. This kind of active citizenship and public politics is being taught through experiential, "hands-on" methods. Through this effort, a number of us who are teaching the experimental sections

are discovering that the NIF model of deliberative dialogue is not only highly effective as a method for public problem solving, but also has enormous potential for improving student learning outcomes. The method allows for students to learn about a particular subject matter like diversity, but in the context of real-world problems that affect them directly. Students find this way of learning much more engaging and instructive than more traditional classroom approaches that cast them in more passive roles or that teach subject matter in ways that are more abstracted from experience.

In addition to learning how to participate in and moderate deliberative public forums, students are also reflecting on the ideas behind deliberative democracy and, in some cases, are learning how to frame issues themselves in ways that make productive citizen dialogue and action more likely. Some of these students are modeling these civic skills for younger students to fulfill their "community service" requirement in this course by moderating deliberative forums at local high schools. Franklin Pierce College students (as well as the high school student participants) are responding very positively to this new approach for discussing social and political issues. Professors and students report that this new way of talking about public issues makes classroom discussion more civil and productive. And in this age when many young people are cynical and feel deeply alienated from the formal political system, our students claim that these experiences are leading them to reexamine their attitudes about politics and feel a stronger sense of self-efficacy in relation to the wider social and political world.

...we were becoming aware of a contradiction between our commitment to liberal education and our adherence to professional identities....

Transformative Faculty Development

In addition to improving the climate on campus as well as classroom teaching and learning, some faculty are finding other benefits from this new pedagogy and participation in public life, which has come from their involvement in the institutes and workshops of the New Hampshire Center for Civic Life. These experiences are proving to be a very powerful faculty development initiative.

A year ago, my colleague Craig Platt and I recounted in the *Higher Education Exchange* that a few of us on the faculty recognized that the practice of public deliberation offered us a new way to talk about a host of college issues ranging from our institution-

al mission to problems of race and diversity on campus. We also mentioned that, at a more subtle level, we were becoming aware of a contradiction between our commitment to integrated, liberal education and our adherence to professional identities rooted in positivist epistemology and in the scholarship of expertise. A year later, even more faculty are involved in teaching and using the practices of deliberative dialogue and in contemplating the shortcomings of our traditional notions of scholarship, teaching, and service.

As we embrace the idea that our job as professors at a liberal arts college should include modeling and teaching civic skills to our students, we find ourselves more willing to explore terrain outside our specialized academic area and to engage the community beyond our classrooms and our campus. We are now examining how our professional disciplines can better serve the democratic purpose of building our public life and commonwealth. As a result, our teaching and scholarship is taking on a much more public, practical, and active dimension. One of the great benefits of this change has been that we and our students are beginning to experience the dignity and generative quality of work that has public impact.

As we work with students and the larger public in the context of deliberative forums, we are also discovering the weaknesses of relying primarily on the debate mode of discourse and the "expert" model of many professional systems. We see why the exclusive use of these models is no longer working well, and we recognize that professors and students alike need a more effective way to deal with pressing public issues, which often have at their basis disagreements rooted in different values, life experiences, and moral perspectives.

This is the great lesson in how our college is responding to the challenge to make our campus climate more welcoming of diversity. Our first effort was to make use of an outside expert who outlined and advocated a particular set of institutional and personal responses to race and ethnic tensions for the college community. The expert's suggestions were publicly endorsed and reinforced by top administrators at the college during the campuswide meeting

DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY PROJECT

Below are samples of students' comments that speak of their experience of naming and framing the issue of "Improving Race and Ethnic Relations on Campus," creating an issue book as a discussion guide, getting trained in how to moderate for deliberation, and then convening and moderating a series of four campus forums on the issue. This all happened in a social science general education course entitled "Science of Society II" during the spring semester of 1999 at Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, New Hampshire.

Garrett LaBar

Throughout my Franklin Pierce College education all of my regular "Individual & Community" courses involved some form of informal debates. The people in my classes were very opinionated, and usually a select few dominated the debate with their rhetoric. The discussions usually shifted away from the main topic, and I'm left saying to myself, "I got nothing out of this class!" However,...deliberation [as presented in this class] has shown me that it is possible to teach a class to engage in structured dialogue. . . . I will bring these techniques into my future classrooms [as a school teacher].

Jarrett Hickey

At first I was very hesitant . . . at the beginning, I was very cynical of how all this was going to turn out. Here we were, a predominantly white male class that was going forth with the idea of holding forums to deal with the race and ethnic relations on campus. To compound my cynicism, I was highly doubtful that people would *voluntarily* show up to our forums. . . . After a plan of action was set and was taking form, I became a bit more excited about this project. I really believed that we were doing something positive for the campus community. We were literally making FPC history and we were also the pioneers for something that might continue in the future. Although I rarely showed it, I was very proud of what we were doing and was glad to be a part of it all. I never imagined that I would be doing forums in one of my I & C classes. . . . I think it has been a great experience for me. I think I can safely say that the experiences from this course are ones that not only will appear in my portfolio, (the forum booklet that I am so damn proud of, by the way), but also will take with me when I graduate in May 2000. It definitely was an experience unlike any other in my college career.

Heather Riva

I look at the forum as an experiment in hopes to improve campus issues; I feel this has succeeded. . . . I did not realize the depth of problems that existed for minority students on campus. I feel these forums are opening up the minds of people who have rarely had the opportunity to experience other cultures.

Many suggestions for improvement came forth from the forums. It was interesting to see how students reacted to each of the four choices. The most surprising issue addressed in all of the four forums was the importance of a more diverse faculty. . . . It seems to be a campuswide opinion that these forums were a step in the right direction and beneficial for the campus. For those who came to the forums, their minds have been opened to realize that problems on the campus exist and that many fellow students have concerns and want to improve the diversity on campus. The forums have acted as a catalyst for improving the awareness of diversity.

Aaron Childs

I come from a small New Hampshire rural town where there is no [racial] diversity. The first time I came across an African-American was during high school in a neighboring city. . . . By holding such a series of forums, I feel that we have made a positive change in others' attitudes. Not only were there steps forward in this issue at Franklin Pierce College, but also at Keene State College as well when our group offered to hold a forum for their college. After the forum was over, one of the girls on the student government expressed her thought that they (Keene State College) would like to try to work with us (Franklin Pierce College) in building a program such as the one we are doing. She also made a suggestion of trying to bring in other colleges as well. Personally, I gained a lot from these forums. Not only have I learned more about other minority group members, and by moderating them (the forums) it has helped me speak out in front of groups of people more openly and express my thoughts on issues. Coming from a small town and not seeing a diverse community within itself, holding a series of forums gave me the opportunity to see where others were coming from. The biggest lesson, however, I learned from this is that you can change things if you try. I truly believe we have started something greater than any of us had ever imagined.

Kris Knight

I found out the opinion of some of the black students on campus as well as the white students. Our class did away with the real class schedule about midsemester. This was the point at which Science of Society turned around for me. I was learning about the problems of America, then we went and tried to find out America's problems by using hands-on forums that we led and moderated. The class prior to the forums was interesting, but a stand-offish approach to teaching. All we did was read then talk, read then talk. I started to get bored. I was glad that we were given another option . . . and on the whole I thought it was a good experience for me.

and the written communications that followed it. Interestingly enough, though, this approach had mixed results. While many found the presentation and films enlightening and appreciated the public commitment that the college's leaders were making to the principles of tolerance and respect for diversity, many others disagreed with the particular policies being advocated, or were critical of the need to make any significant changes.

What has become clear since then, however, is that we need a structure that can provide an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to talk more openly about this issue. We need to be able to "work through" the deep feelings and views that these incidents brought up, to examine the dynamics of our contentious relationship around the issue of race and ethnicity, and to discover the common ground for action necessary for improving our campus climate for diversity. Administratively determined goals and policies go only so far. To have real legitimacy, support, and effectiveness, they must spring from the will, purposes, and interests of the larger college community. This kind of public will and purpose cannot be generated and defined without opportunities for deliberation and decision making by members of the whole community.

Administratively determined goals and policies go only so far.

There are many problems that a college administration (or our nation's elected officials) cannot solve alone because the problems are so deeply embedded in the whole community. Racism is certainly one of those systemic problems in American society. The nature of the problem requires the community or "the public" to get involved in deciding what should be done and in doing it. Systemic problems like this need the benefit of a sustained deliberative conversation among community members as well as the varied and complementary actions that would flow from it. Leaders can help to facilitate that kind of effort by helping to provide the conditions for it, but much of the work must be done by the members of the community if actions taken are to be widely supported and result in deep and lasting change.

Deliberation and the public-building strategies of working *with* the public rather than *for* them on deep and systemic social problems provides a way to generate a different kind of knowledge and action that is essential for addressing such problems — public

knowledge and public action. This kind of knowledge and action, we are beginning to see, is not available through our traditional methods of scientific and technical expertise or through interest group-oriented political action. As our first series of campus dialogues on race and ethnic relations demonstrated, it is available when the public comes together to pool their various resources and perspectives, and to make decisions through informed and responsible deliberation. That initial series of deliberative dialogues allowed the white participants to discover that the first steps in building a warmer climate for racial diversity on campus required them to be open to acknowledging the very different experience of their classmates of color.

...much of the work must be done by the members of the community....

Expert knowledge and organizing to advocate particular perspectives are important parts of the citizen's political process, helping, as they do, to make clear the terms of and options for deliberation and action. But, without the opportunity for the public to test these facts and perspectives in face-to-face deliberation in light of theirs' and others' diverse experience and values, the public cannot develop the more complex, more faceted, and more flexible understanding necessary to address deep and systemic public problems; that is, it cannot develop its public judgment. In the absence of more and better public deliberation by citizens, expert knowledge, interest-based advocacy, and partisanship leave democracy without a public will. Actions taken in the absence of this public will are less wise, just, and effective.

Our experiences and these kinds of insights are leading us to rethink the limits and possibilities of the academic disciplines and professional practices that we teach at the college. Several of us are now asking how we can practice and teach our disciplines in ways that are more "catalytic"; that is, we want to engender in our students (and those we work with in communities) greater self-determination, political sovereignty, and attentiveness to the wisdom that comes through deliberative public conversation. In turn, we want our students to be able to engender these same qualities in others in their public and professional lives after graduation. This way of operating professionally differs markedly from the more dominant view of professional practice as primarily expert intervention and service to clients or consumers.

In addition to the new understandings we are gaining about the practice of our academic disciplines, engaging in and teaching public deliberation is also helping many of us who teach general

education courses at the college to find new and more powerful ways to meet the goals of this program. For the last decade, our college has built an integrated core curriculum with the overarching theme of "Individual & Community." The civic dimensions of this theme are now being more fully explored in large part because of the exposure faculty and students are getting to new concepts and forms of political education through the New Hampshire Center for Civic Life. Moreover, we are now teaching and learning about this theme much more through our practical involvement and participation in the communities that surround the college.

Conclusion

Unlike other institutions that stress citizenship and civic education, our emphasis on public deliberation brings a deeper focus to democratic education. It does so because it promotes "public-making" more than "public service." Most colleges and universities that are starting to include civic education in their curriculum emphasize service in what they mean by citizenship. Public-making is different from public service in that it focuses on building the public's capacity to make decisions together. It is distinctive from other civic-oriented activities like voluntarism, community service, or service learning. It is also different from more conventional forms of political participation such as voting or political advocacy. These are all good and important modes of political participation in their own right, but are perhaps not as fundamental, we are beginning to think, to the health of democracy as is the community- and public-building that comes from more and better — public deliberation.

What ultimately distinguishes our new efforts from other approaches to civic education is the view of "the public" that undergirds it. Our new approach begins with the assumption that the public is an invaluable resource for policy decisions and for addressing public problems. Other types of civic education, which understand participation primarily in terms of philanthropic service, or advocacy, or electoral politics, often view the public differently — as needing to be helped, or educated, or persuaded. But the kind of politics that makes citizen deliberation central to

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democracy trusts the public's experience and intelligence as a vital resource, and seeks to nurture that intelligence and give it opportunity for development and expression.

It is this particular emphasis on public deliberation, done within the context of the liberal arts and their related disciplines and through the general core curriculum as well as in the more public arenas of campus and community life, that is making our college's educational efforts more distinctive, effective, and profound.

Author's Note

We are not alone in this work and, as such, have benefited greatly from the experience of the other National Issues Forums Public Policy Institutes located around the country and, for the most part, in higher education settings. Our beginnings in New Hampshire and at Franklin Pierce College have been especially aided by the wise advice and generous help of Betty Knighton, director of the West Virginia Center for Civic Life at the University of Charleston; Harris Sokoloff, director of the University of Pennsylvania's Public Policy Institute and Center for School Study Councils; and Ruth Yellowhawk, director of the South Dakota Issues Forums and the South Dakota Public Policy Institute at the Chiesman Foundation for Democracy. David Dillon, American government teacher at State College High School and educational director of the Public Issues Forum of Centre County, State College, Pennsylvania, generously shared his wealth of experience with me as I tried to adapt National Issues Forums and the practices of deliberative democracy for use in my college courses.

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DIVERSITY, DEMOCRACY, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:

Higher Education and Its Unique Opportunity

By Debra Humphreys

At the beginning of a new century, America is basking in a period of unprecedented economic prosperity. Papers are filled with stories about American-style democratic systems sweeping the globe. Americans at home, however, are engaged in two national conversations that are much less sanguine about the health of our nation. These two conversations have been largely separate, but both are marked by a tenor of urgency. One conversation involves civic and political disengagement and the other involves diversity, hate, and separation.

I would like to suggest that higher education has a role to play responding to the concerns at the heart of both of these conversations. In fact, colleges and universities across the country are already developing a new set of educational strategies that holds great promise for addressing these pressing national concerns. I will also argue, however, that bringing these two conversations together is critical to bringing our nation together and to revitalizing a sense of community both at the local and the national levels. I believe that encouraging greater public engagement in civic life requires that we pay much closer attention to issues of diversity.

Readers of this journal will be all too familiar with the tenor and thrust of the first national conversation about civic engagement. Commentators in this publication and many others have expressed alarm at a perceived decline in civic engagement, especially among young people. Alexander Astin puts it this way.

> *Something is terribly wrong with the state of American democracy. Most citizens don't vote, negative campaigning reigns, and public distrust, contempt, and hostility toward "government" have reached unprecedented heights. Student interest and engagement in politics are at all-time lows, according to the most recent surveys.... While academics occasionally comment on this sorry state of affairs, they seldom suggest that higher education may have played a part*

in creating these problems, or that it can or should do anything about them.

In one of the most influential articles on this topic, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," Robert Putnam argues that Americans increasingly distrust public institutions, no longer actively participate in politics, and are less likely than ever to join civic groups. Since this influential article was published, several commentators have expressed skepticism about the evidence of civic disengagement. Putnam, however, is about to release a new book that expands on the arguments he made in the article and promises to provide additional data to support the general thesis of America's declining engagement in at least some traditional forms of public life.

We may indeed need to look more closely at how Americans are, or are not, engaging in public life, but there seems to be no denying that especially young Americans are cynical about traditional democratic institutions and their ability to contribute lasting solutions to the nation's pressing problems. It also seems clear that higher education needs to be more engaged in efforts to reinvigorate civic life in America. Many higher education leaders have recognized this need and are mobilizing to address it. One prominent effort has brought together leaders from research universities and education associations and has issued a declaration designed to spur action on the part of colleges and universities. "The Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University" calls for colleges and universities to revitalize their campus cultures through a renewed commitment to serving the needs of their communities and the nation as a whole. The organization for which I work, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) is part of this group and a signatory to this declaration.

While I certainly agree that higher education has a role to play in reinvigorating American civic life, we need to go beyond a renewed sense of civic mission for universities or the creation of more opportunities for students to become civically engaged during their college years. College educators also need to embed issues of diversity *and* democracy throughout the undergraduate curriculum. We need to teach today's students not only about the structures of American democratic systems, but also the history of America's failures to ensure democratic rights and privileges for all its citizens. These failures, combined with the changing demo-

graphics of the country require us, in fact, to think differently about this challenge of reinvigorating civic life and about the specific role colleges and universities can play in addressing it.

To meet this challenge effectively, we need to pay attention to the other national conversation about diversity, hate, and separation to which I refer above. Higher education leaders are also already responding to calls for action at the heart of *this* conversation, which fundamentally is about the nation's response to its increasing diversity and the increasing power and voice of various minority populations.

Many mainstream public commentators have expressed alarm about a rise in acts of violence motivated by prejudice and discrimination. Hate crimes legislation is being debated in state legislatures across the country and in Congress. These actions and President Clinton's Initiative on Race respond to a concern among the general public. Public opinion measures suggest that the American public is alarmed at the fact that Americans seem to be simply growing apart — splitting into separate, unequal, and frequently hostile cultural and ethnic groupings who live, work, worship, and play in separate enclaves. A poll conducted by DYG, Inc. and sponsored by the Ford Foundation's Campus Diversity Initiative found that a majority of Americans believe that "America is growing apart" (National Poll, 1998). This conversation about hate, and about America's response to its increasing diversity isn't a brand-new conversation. Because of several highly publicized incidents and these new demonstrations of national leadership, however, it does seem to have finally reached a level of national awareness that may ultimately present the possibility of real change and of enabling genuine civic involvement of many more Americans traditionally left out of the nation's public life.

Higher education has a critical role to play in addressing both of these sets of concerns and is increasingly doing so through an emerging set of educational strategies. In fact, higher education may have a more important role to play in these matters than ever before given that a much larger percentage of high school graduates are now attending college and these new students bring to campus a more diverse array of cultural, ethnic, and racial backgrounds than ever before. This reality presents a huge challenge, but also an unprecedented set of opportunities.

In order to respond to these changes and take advantage of these opportunities, AAC&U has joined with many others to sup-

port the development of new educational strategies and diversity courses through a multiproject national initiative called "American Commitments: Diversity, Democracy, and Liberal Learning" begun in 1993 and involving hundreds of colleges and universities around the nation. From the beginning of this initiative, those who conceived this project believed that for higher education's diversity agenda to be effective, it had to be embedded in a reexamination and engagement with America's democratic history, practices, and institutions. This belief, however, and the simple use of the term "democracy" turned out to be a much harder "sell" than the leaders of the project ever anticipated. Given America's history of denying basic democratic rights to so many of its residents, many of those individuals involved in the diversity movement are skeptical of any calls for a *renewed* commitment to democracy. Many are especially skeptical about calls to a *return* to some better time of civic engagement and national unity. Many people involved in the diversity movement believe that any previous sense of national unity we may have had in America was forged by denying the diversity in our midst and, in fact, enabled the civic involvement of only a small portion of the population.

...the linking of diversity, democracy, and civic engagement is essential.

Working with colleges and universities as they attempt to teach more accurately about America's past and create effective learning environments for much more diverse student populations, we are more convinced than ever, however, that the linking of diversity, democracy, and civic engagement is essential. We are also, however, more cognizant now of a series of shifts that need to occur in *how* we teach about democracy *and* diversity and the preconditions that are required before genuine public engagement can occur on a large scale in a country as diverse as ours.

In our college classrooms, we need first to acknowledge both our differences and the failures of American democracy. We need to recognize the contributions that various diverse communities have made in building America's communities and public institutions (Joseph, 1995). We also need to learn to listen to understand, and to appreciate that diverse voices and experiences are needed to solve America's complex social problems.

We also need to realize that there is a big difference between simply assembling a diverse group of people and engaging the diversity in our midst in educationally productive ways. The good news is that colleges and universities like those involved in AAC&U's American Commitments projects have developed a

variety of new educational strategies to engage diversity in just these productive ways.

Many colleges and universities are creating programs that connect students' in-classroom learning about diversity with experiences in solving real-world problems in communities. For instance, in a program at Queens College in New York, students work with faculty members on research projects that make use of the diverse communities surrounding the college. In one such project, eight students examined relations among African-American and Asian-American residents in Brooklyn directly following a boycott of a Korean grocery store by African-American residents that made headlines across the country. Students, many of whom were Asian-American or African-American and from the local community, conducted interviews and found that there was less animosity between the two groups than many assumed after learning about the boycott from the media. One African-American student in the project, Sharon Bradley, expressed her surprise "at how many people thought that the boycott incidents were blown out of proportion." Another African-American student, Mica McCarthy, reported talking to more people who felt the boycotts were justified because of a pattern of "lack of respect for black customers." She believes that the project gave all of the students deeper insights into multiple perspectives on racial questions (AAC&U, 1997).

Using another new educational approach, the University of Michigan now offers for-credit courses on "Intergroup Relations, Conflict, and Community" that teach students about how different groups have experienced American democracy now and in the past. The courses also, however, teach specific intergroup dialogue skills. They purposely bring together students from two different groups (e.g., African-American and white students, or gay, lesbian, bisexual, and straight students) and enable them to work together to address conflicts that may arise among and within these groups. Students learn how to constructively address conflicts that may arise on campus. They explore the possibilities and preconditions for building community across racial and ethnic boundaries.

Students in diversity courses are not just learning about oppression, then. Across

the country, students are taking the knowledge and skills they are learning in diversity courses and are using them to solve real-life problems that inevitably arise on diverse campuses. Students who have taken a new required course on "Self and Community" at Olivet College in Michigan, for example, report that they now find it easier to discuss issues of racial conflict outside the classroom. Students report that taking the course has encouraged them to reach out and socialize with students who have backgrounds different from their own. Campus leaders at SUNY-Buffalo report that a required course on "American Pluralism and the Search for Equality" has also had an impact beyond the classroom. Students consistently report that the course gives them an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues. In fact, in the midst of a heated campus debate in which race figured prominently, students from this course were the ones who were most informed about the issues and contributed most productively to the debates (Humphreys, 1998).

Many campuses also made use of the opportunity presented by President Clinton's Initiative on Race. With support from the Ford Foundation, AAC&U supported over 60 colleges and universities in forging alliances with community partners to build trust, conduct candid discussions, and learn from one another about America's racial legacies. Through these initiatives, thousands of college students were engaged in community dialogue and problem solving grounded in the history of genuine interracial community-building.

Are these new strategies, courses, and programs having an impact? Do they have the potential to encourage a different level of civic engagement for more of today's college students? Many are skeptical about this outcome. Readers of this journal will, no doubt, be familiar with the well-publicized critiques of the diversity movement in higher education. Critics suggest that teaching about the *failures* of democracy undermines students' commitment to American democratic institutions. They also argue that the acknowledgment of difference entailed in new programs designed to serve specific new populations of students only serves to divide students rather than bring them together and strengthen a sense of community.

In fact, the evidence is beginning to suggest that the exact opposite is true. Teaching about America's diversity and the struggles for justice and democratic inclusion that pervade our nation's

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history can renew students' sense of hope about democratic institutions and their commitment to public involvement. As the examples above suggest, diversity education is bringing students of different backgrounds together. In addition, America's increasingly diverse college campuses are, indeed, providing opportunities for students to interact productively across racial and ethnic lines. A common misconception about campus diversity and diversity programs is that they encourage racial and ethnic self-segregation among students that undermine the educational promise of a genuinely multicultural college community.

A number of studies suggest that student self-segregation by race is not as widespread as one might suppose....

Research suggests that just the opposite seems to be true. A number of studies suggest that student self-segregation by race is not as widespread as one might suppose from media coverage of the phenomena. It also suggests that the programs and activities in which students do cluster in separate racial/ethnic groups aren't preventing students from interacting across racial/ethnic lines. In one recent study, Anthony Lising Antonio examined the extent to which students perceived racial balkanization at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and whether their perceptions reflected the reality of actual close friendship patterns at the institution. He found that students at UCLA do, indeed, *view* their campus as racially balkanized. More than 90 percent of students in his surveys agreed that students predominantly cluster by race and ethnicity on campus. When Antonio calculated the actual racial/ethnic diversity or homogeneity of close friendship groups, however, a very different picture emerged. Only 17 percent of UCLA students, or about one in six, reported having friendship groups that were racially and ethically homogenous and the most common friendship group on campus (46 percent) was, in fact, racially and ethnically mixed with no racial or ethnic group constituting a majority (Antonio, 1999).

Another earlier study also found that especially students of color report *frequent* interaction across race and ethnicity in informal situations on college campuses. This study of 390 institutions also found that ethnic-specific activities didn't seem to impede intergroup contact for the students who participated in them.

Programs like racial/ethnic theme houses and study groups seemed to help students involved in them persist and succeed in college and increased their involvement overall with other areas of college life in which they interacted frequently across racial/ethnic lines (Hurtado, et. al 1994).

Patricia Gurin has also just completed a study of diversity and learning outcomes at the University of Michigan. She found that "a racially and ethnically diverse university student body has far-ranging and significant benefits for all students, nonminorities and minorities alike." She argues, in fact, that "patterns of racial segregation and separation historically rooted in our national life can be broken by diversity experiences in higher education." Her research demonstrates that campus diversity is having an impact far beyond the college years. For instance, Gurin found that "diversity experiences during college had impressive effects on the extent to which graduates … were living racially and ethnically integrated lives in the postcollege world. Students with the most diversity experiences during college had the most cross-racial interactions five years after leaving college" (Gurin, 1999).

The health of America's civic life and the very possibility of greater civic engagement among more Americans depends on bringing different groups of Americans together, encouraging greater respect for the variety of communities that make up the nation, and learning the skills we all need to live productively with difference. The various strategies being developed by practitioners involved in the campus diversity movement are proving to be highly effective in preparing students for an informed civic engagement in today's diverse American communities.

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AN INVITATION

By David Mathews

Moving down the runway at an ever-increasing speed, my Delta flight to Los Angeles lifted off the surface and began a slow climb to its cruising altitude. While this was happening, I was reading the articles for this *Higher Education Exchange*. The takeoff struck me as an apt analogy for what this issue is attempting. As Debra Humphreys has noted, the *Exchange* has been moving down the same "runway" since its inception. The central theme has been described in a number of ways: the relation of the academy and public life, the importance of democratic civil society, scholarship as public work, higher education and community-building, and democracy and deliberation.

Beginning with this issue, the *Exchange* is committing itself to a systematic intellectual project —a "lift-off" if you will — powered by three distinct but related lines of inquiry. Taken together, they will explore the different meanings of democratic politics that are being discussed today. None is right or wrong, as Harry Boyte observes, yet they make very different assumptions about what self-government means and requires.

This publication is one part of a research project that includes an annual seminar (now held in Washington, D. C.) on the relationship of the academy and the public. It provides another opportunity for discussing the questions the *Exchange* will be addressing over the next two years. I mention this because these questions are very much open to you, the reader, and what we hope will be an increasing number of people who find them important.

One question that will be the subject of a series of articles is the nature of the claims that democracy makes on higher education, which will be addressed by dealing with the claims themselves and by looking at the way institutional higher education views democracy. The concept that higher education has of "the public," especially the understanding of the public implied in the way colleges and universities behave toward the citizenry, should be very revealing. Looking at how the citizens who serve as trustees think

of their fellow citizens should also be interesting. Still another approach to this question will be to ask how higher education sees "the public and its problems" (to borrow a title). There will be other stories like the one Douglas Challenger wrote on how institutions are providing space on their campus for what can be described as "public-making" activities. Students like D. Conor Seyle will report on the impact that such efforts can have, not just on the citizenry at large, but on a student body's perception of its own citizenship.

Institutional higher education is directed by presidents, provosts, deans, and trustees. But higher education is far more than institutions, as Jay Rosen points out it is a collection of academic disciplines and professional studies. It is the faculty. And what is happening to that faculty is very important, as Maria Farland explains in her article. So future issues of the *Exchange* will look into the way faculty members understand their relationship to the public or public life, and more personally, the way they see themselves as public beings — a topic already introduced in Mary Stanley's article. Other pieces will play out the implications these perspectives have for the way academics understand scholarship. Inevitably, the *Exchange* will be drawn into the question of what it means to know and where, as a bearer of knowledge, the scholar "stands" in public life. R. Claire Snyder and David Brown have already raised these issues in their articles.

Higher education also has a number of other constituencies such as professional groups like lawyers, physicians, farmers, business executives, and journalists or, in some cases, whole communities. Ask colleges and universities what they offer these groups and you will hear a familiar mantra: "teaching, research, and service," with an emphasis on service. The *Exchange* will raise what may seem an odd question: "What is political about this supposedly apolitical assistance?" This question cuts in several ways. When a college or university enters a community to bring technical advice or to foster economic development or school improvement or to work for any other purpose, it structures a relationship with the community, that reflects unstated assumptions about what citizens can or can't do. In addition, the assistance offered carries with it a predetermined definition of the problem, which is usually a technical definition. That may obscure the moral nature of the difficulty ("What should we do about . . .") as well as the necessity of making public choices on

issues that, by their very nature, require judgments on which a number of options are most consistent with what people hold dear. Even the technical information given to professionals carries with it unstated assumptions about how that profession should relate to the public. The *Exchange* will provide an opportunity for asking whether the politics that academic institutions bring with them in their relation to constituents is consistent with democratic politics.

Consider this an invitation to contribute to the ongoing exploration of the meaning of democratic politics and the role of higher education. I invite you to write the editors of this publication; without you, it will be a very slow lift-off.

CONTRIBUTORS

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David Mathews, who is president of the Kettering Foundation, was secretary of health, education, and welfare in the Ford administration, and before that, president of The University of Alabama. He has written extensively on such subjects as education, political theory, southern history, public policy, and international problem solving. His most recent books are *Is There a Public for Public Schools?* and a revised edition of *Politics for People*.

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Mary Stanley taught at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs for many years. Currently she is an independent scholar, writer, and researcher. She has published in the areas of citizenship, service learning, and the role of women in public life. Mary hosts a public affairs radio program in Syracuse, New York, "The Good Society Forum" and directs a research project on youth culture.

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